WASHINGTON TO LEAR

NUMBER

OF THREE HUNDRED

COPIES PRINTED FOR PRIVATE

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LETTERS

FROM

GEORGE WASHINGTON

TO

TOBIAS LEAR

WITH AN

APPENDIX

CONTAINING MISCELLANEOUS
WASHINGTON LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

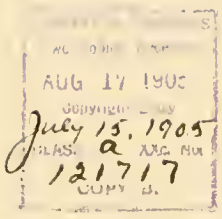
REPRINTED FROM THE ORIGINALS IN THE COLLECTION OF MR. WILLIAM K. BIXBY, OF ST. LOUIS, MO.

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

ROCHESTER, N. Y.
1905

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Washingtoniana



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INTRODUCTION

NOTHING more than a brief sketch of Tobias Lear has ever been written, though for many years he was a prominent and very useful man in national affairs. He was closely associated with President George Washington, served as his private secretary, was a tutor in his family, and was honored with his particular friendship. Mr. Lear was born in the Lear mansion, on Hunking street, in Portsmouth, N. H., September 19, 1762, and was the son of Captain Tobias Lear, once a shipmaster and later in life a successful farmer. He received a liberal education and was graduated from Harvard in 1783.

Immediately after the close of the Revolutionary war, General Washington retired to Mount Vernon in the belief that his public career had closed, and in the fervent hope that he might resume the quiet life of a country gentleman. His correspondence, however, steadily increased and soon became so burdensome that the services of a private secretary were needed. It was also necessary that a tutor be provided for Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, grandchildren of Mrs. Washington and children of John Parke Custis, whom Washington had adopted immediately after the death of the father, which occurred soon after the surrender of Cornwallis. Accordingly, late in 1785, Washington wrote to his friend, General Benjamin Lincoln, and asked him to recommend a suitable person. General Lincoln consulted the Rev. Dr. Joseph Willard, president of Harvard college, and the Rev. Dr. Samuel Haven, pastor of the South Parish of Portsmouth, N. H., and recommended Mr. Lear, in a letter dated January 4, 1786, saying: "I have at last found a Mr. Lear, who supports the character of a gentleman and a scholar. He was educated at Cambridge, Mass. Since he left college he has been in Europe, and in different parts of this continent. It is said he is a good master of languages. He reads French, and writes an exceedingly good letter." In his reply, written at Mount Vernon, February 6, 1786, Washington said:

"Let me, in the first place, thank you for your kind attention to my inquiries; and in the next, pray you to know precisely from Mr. Lear upon what terms he would come to me. I am not inclined to leave matters of that kind to after discussion or misconception. Whatever agreement is previously made shall be pointedly fulfilled on my part, which will prevent every cause of complaint on his.

"Mr. Lear, or any other who may come into my family in the blended characters of preceptor to the children, and as a clerk or private secretary to me, will sit at my table, will live as I live, will mix with the company who resort to the house, and will be treated in every respect with civility and proper attention. He will have his washing done in the family, and have his linen and stockings mended

by the maids of it. The duties, which will be required of him, are generally such as appertain to the offices above mentioned. The first will be very trifling, till the children are a little more advanced; and the latter will be equally so, as my correspondences decline (which I am endeavoring to effect), and after my accounts and other old matters are brought up. To descend more minutely into his avocations I am unable, because occasional matters may call for particular services; but nothing derogatory will be asked or expected. After this explanation of my wants, I request Mr. Lear will mention the annual sum he will expect for these services, and I will give him a decided answer by the return of the stages, which now carry the mail and travel quick. A good hand, as well as a proper diction, would be a recommendation on account of fair entries, and for the benefit of the children who will have to copy after it."

A satisfactory arrangement was made, and Mr. Lear entered Washington's family as private secretary and tutor at an annual salary of $200. After he had been there for two years on the most familiar footing, he wrote: "General Washington is, I believe, the only man of an exalted character who does not lose some part of his respectability by an intimate acquaintance. I have never found a single thing that could lessen my respect for him. A complete knowledge of his honesty, uprightness, and candor in all his private transactions has sometimes led me to think him more than a man." On his part, Washington was fully satisfied. He held Mr. Lear in high esteem, trusted him implicitly, and relied upon him in many emergencies.

A few months after entering Washington's family, Mr. Lear was sent on a tour of observation to Pittsburg, to obtain accurate information respecting Washington's lands in Pennsylvania. The young man attended to the business with intelligence and fidelity. During the next six months he acted as secretary and tutor at Mount Vernon. In May, 1788, he visited his birthplace and wrote Washington an important letter regarding the proposed Federal constitution, then under discussion in the New Hampshire convention. After Washington's election to the presidency, Lear accompanied him to New York and wrote an interesting account of the inauguration. In the procession Washington rode in the state coach, Tobias Lear and David Humphreys, his two secretaries, following immediately after in the President's own carriage. In October, 1789, President Washington made a tour of New England, accompanied by Mr. Lear. When he entered Portsmouth, Lear's native place, Washington rode on horseback, and Lear in an open carriage. A chronicle of the times says: "As they passed on, many, from his position and dignified appearance, mistook the Colonel for the President, and bestowed upon the Secretary that honor which was meant for 'The Father of his Country.'" Alighting from his horse, Washington went on foot to visit the house where his secretary was born and to pay his respects to Lear's venerable mother.

Proposed Lease of Mt. Vernon

Facsimile

Proposed Lease of Mt. Vernon

Facsimile

From the enquiries which have already been made of you, relatively to my Farm at Mount Vernon, I take the liberty of sending you the terms on which I mean to lease them. — My expectation of disposing of them at the Rents therein mentioned, to such tenants as I should chuse, is not very sanguine; — nor would I incline to do it to the Slavery farmers of this Country, if I had a tolerably well founded hope of getting them from many other, where husbandry is better understood and more rationally practiced; the mention of which to some of your acquaintance as you may chance to fall in with them (particularly English & Scotch, the latter more especially) might be a means perhaps of your suggesting it to others, in the Land they came from.

It is not my intention, At least at the present moment, to let the Negroes go with the Land; but if enquiries on this head should be repeated, it might be useful to me, to learn on what terms these, and the Lands conjointly, could be disposed of. —

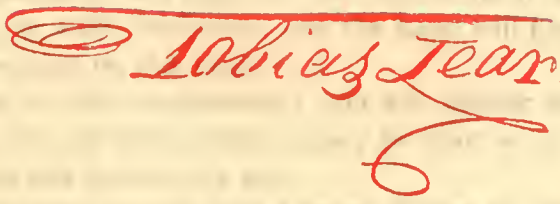
questions with great freedom, reciting the fresh grievances of his countrymen against England, dwelling upon the anger of the American people, declaring their determination to obtain a compliance with the terms of the treaty of peace, and showing their elaborate preparations for war. It is difficult to resist the thought that Washington expected this letter would be opened in the mails and that a copy of it would be sent to the British ministers. If it was so treated it certainly gave them a clear view of the whole situation and showed them the wisdom of conciliation and a prompt negotiation of a new treaty. One of the most interesting paragraphs in the correspondence gives Washington's views on the question of slavery and shows his strong desire to liberate the negroes on his estates. On this subject he was far in advance of the vast majority of his fellow citizens. There are many other valuable references to the history of the times and to those associated with Washington in the development of republican government. The letters will, indeed, be a revelation to those whose knowledge of Washington is confined to his career as a soldier and a statesman. Here we are afforded a close view of his home life; here we see the man as he was known only to his intimate friends—painstaking, thorough, and scrupulously exact in his business affairs; watchful that he might not do an unintentional wrong; attentive to the minutest details of domestic arrangements, that Mrs. Washington might be relieved of as many cares as possible; courteous, kindly, and considerate in all his dealings; strong in his friendships, constant in his affections, and abundantly blessed with cheerfulness and good humor.

In the Appendix will be found a miscellaneous collection of Washington letters and documents, reprinted with exactness from the originals in the collection of Mr. Bixby. Many of these are of extraordinary interest. The most important of all documents bearing the name of Washington is undoubtedly his commission as commander-in-chief of the Continental army, which is in the Library of Congress, and assuredly the next most important is the Letter of Instructions from the Continental congress, the original of which is in Mr. Bixby's collection. This not only notifies him of his appointment to the command of the army but gives him precise directions for the discharge of his duty. It is here correctly printed for the first time. Among the miscellaneous letters will be found some of the greatest interest to students of American history, notably Washington's letters to Jones, Jefferson, Tilghman, Robert Morris, and Patrick Henry. They throw a flood of light upon the history of the times and strikingly exhibit Washington's intense patriotism and far-sighted statesmanship.

The publication of the letters contained in this volume seems desirable because the loss to students of American history and of Washington's life and character would be irreparable if, through some accident, the originals were destroyed. All the illustrations and, with three or four exceptions, all the letters, are now published for the first time, and both illustrations and letters are copyrighted.

William H. Samson.




Tobias Lear.

Library

WASHINGTON TO LEAR

INSTRUCTIONS for Mr Lear:

You will proceed to Pittsburgh by the following rout—Leesburgh, Key's Ferry, Bath, Old Town and Fort Cumberland.[1]— From the latter pursue the New road by the Turkey foot to Colo John Stephenson (commonly called Stinson) wch is on the road to Pittsburgh.

When you are at Bath enquire the way to a piece of Land I have on the River about 14 Miles above the town on the way to Old Town and see if it is in the occupation of any one, and on what terms it is held.— A Colo Bruin in Bath, or a Mr McCraken near the Land will I expect be able to give you information on this head.

When you arrive at Colo Stephenson's you will deliver the letter which is addressed to him & receive what money he may be in circumstances or inclination to pay you on my acct.

At Pittsburgh I expect you will find General Butler to whom you have a letter and from whom it is probable you may receive an answer.— If he is not there leave the letter for him in the care of his brother (who lives at that place) or some other.—

Colo Nevill lives at a place called Shirtees[2] Six miles below Pittsburgh and I believe not much out of the road to my Land on Millers run (lately recovered) or to Colo Cannons in the vicinity of it.

You will converse fully and freely with Colo Nevill on the points touched on in my letter—hear his sentiments on them—and find out if you can how far and with what cordiallity he is disposed to serve me in providing Tenants and securing the Rents of the newly recovered Lands— You will be able to learn from him also whether Colo Cannon is at home or

1 This route lay along the northern boundary of Virginia and into the southwestern part of Pennsylvania.
2 For Chartiers.

or at the Assembly in Philadelphia.— Probably Colº Nevill will ride there with you in the former case or to the land in the latter one— The condition the last is in you will examine and inform the residents thereon of the person I have named as my Agent—and though they have little right to expect favor from me, yet I have no inclination to distress them more than can be avoided.

As Colº Canon lives near my land & is esteemed a worthy and respectable character it would be more convenient and perhaps better—everything considered—that he should superintend my tenants than any other person—but if he declines it and Colº Nevill discovers an inclination to serve me in this business he would be my next choice—and Major McCormick the third— In case either of the first (in the order they are named) should incline to accept this trust there will be no necessity for you to deliver the letter to the latter in person if he should not pass in your way.—

The name of the person accepting the trust must be inserted in the blank power herewith given you.—

You will endeavor to discover from those to whom I have written as also from others what probably is the highest price that can be obtained for the tracts I wish to dispose of—viz—that on Miller's run in Washington county containing about 3,000 Acres—and that on Yohiogany (commonly called Washingtons bottom) in Fayette County[1] of 1,650 acres giving the credits & receiving the payments in the manner mentioned in my letters—& if you should find that none are of opinion that the first will exceed 30/– pr acre and the other 40/– both Pennylª currcy. you may give it out that although I have not named the prices of these tracts in my letters yet you have good reason to believe and indeed to know that if these prices could be averaged (in case the Lands are sold in parcels) that I would be content therewith and assurances might be given of my disposing of them on these terms.

After having finished the business which takes you to Washington County, return home by the way of my other Land in Fayette County the condition of which I wish you to examine over and above the accᵗ you will receive from Major Freeman & then return in by Braddock Road at the

1 These counties are in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania.

the Great Meadows lying on which I have a small tract which sometimes has and at other times has not a tenant (though no rent has ever yet been paid me for it) see in what state & condition this tenement is in.

Your road from hence will cross the N° Branch of Potomack above Fort Cumberland and pass through Rumney[1] and thence to Winchester where you will deliver my letter to M^r White and receive the money due from Gen^l Lees Estate to me if he inclines to pay it.

In this trip you will have an opportunity of satisfying yourself fully with respect to Col° Hulls enquiries which I wish you to do—and also what the legal fees of my Lawyers are in the ejectments lately decided in my favor that I may know better what to add to them.

If Major Freeman can give any acc^t of the suit (an ejectment I believe it is) brought by my Brother Col° Jn° Washington in Fayette Court I should be glad if you would obtain it that I communicate the same to him

Wishing you good health and as pleasant a journey as can be expected from the season I am your sincere friend

G° WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon
Nov^r 30^th 1786

Whereas it may be necessary, during my absence from the Seat of Government to pay certain monies and accts. out of the fund of ten thousand Dollars appropriated to the discharge of Contingent Expenses of Government by a law passed on the 26^th day of March 1790; I therefore do authorize Tobias Lear, my Secretary, to direct such payments to be made in my name, out of said fund, as may come properly within the Same, provided that previous to such direction for payment, all accounts, demands &c shall be exhibited to the Secretary of the Treasury, and shall be pronounced by him to come properly and clearly within the Law making the above appropriation. And I moreover certify that three payments which have been made out of said fund previous to this time, viz. one for Seals procured for the Supreme and Circuit courts of the United States, amounting to ninety one dollars & $\frac{8}{100}$—one to Jeremiah Wadsworth

1 For Romney, in Virginia.

worth for monies advanced and payed to him for the purpose of taking up and securing certain persons who had counterfeited public Securities, amounting to one thousand and sixty one dollars—and one for a seal procured for the District Court of Connecticut, amounting to Eight Dollars were by my order.

Given under my hand in the city of New York this 30th day of August, 1790.

Gº Washington.

[Endorsed: Power from the President of the United States to Tobias Lear authorizing him to draw money for the payment of certain accts. August 30th 1790.]

Philadelphia Septr 5th 1790.

Dear Sir,

After a pleasant Journey we arrived in this City about 2 o'clock on Thursday last.— To-morrow we proceed (if Mrs Washington's health, for she has been much indisposed since she came here) towards Mount Vernon.

The house of Mr R. Morris had, previous to my arrival, been taken by the Corporation[1] for my Residence.— It is the best they could get.— It is, I believe, the best *single house* in the City; yet, without additions it is inadequate to the *commodious* accommodation of my family.— These, I believe, will be made.[2]

The first floor contains only two public Rooms (except one for the *upper* Servants).— The second floor will have two public (drawing) Rooms & with the aid of one room with the partition in it in the back building will be sufficient for the accomodation of Mrs Washington & the children & their maids—besides affording me a small place for a private study & dressing Room.— The third story will furnish you & Mrs Lear with

1 Of the city of Philadelphia.

2 The seat of the national government was removed from New York to Philadelphia in 1790 by act of congress, which adjourned on August 12th, and it was necessary to provide a residence for the President in the latter city. In New York Washington occupied the mansion at No. 10 Cherry street for about nine months, and then moved to a more spacious house owned by Alexander Macomb on the west side of Broadway, between Trinity church and Bowling Green, where M. de Moustier, the French minister, had resided. It was a very pleasant house with a garden extending to the shore of the Hudson and from the upper windows a fine view was had of the river. Washington's lease of the property ran for one year from May 1, 1790, and he made extensive improvements and additions, which entailed a heavy financial loss when he was compelled to remove to Philadelphia.

with a good lodging room—and a public Office (for there is no place below for one) and two Rooms for the Gentlemen of the family.— The Garret has four good Rooms which must serve M^r and M^rs Hyde (unless they should prefer the room over the wash House)—William— and such Servants as it may not be better to place in the addition (as proposed) to the Back Building.— There is a room over the Stable (without a fire place, but by means of a Stove) may serve the Coachman & Postilions ;—and there is a smoke House, which, possibly, may be more useful to me for the accomodation of Servants than for Smoking of Meat.— The intention of the addition to the Back building is to provide a Servants Hall, and one or two (as it will afford) lodging rooms for the Servants ; especially those who are coupled.— There is a very good Wash House adjoining to the Kitchen (under one of the rooms already mentioned).— There are good Stables, but for 12 Horses only, and a Coach House which will hold all my Carriages.—

Speaking of carriages, I have left my Coach to receive a *thorough* repair against I return (which I expect will happen before the first of December) and I request you will visit M^r Clark (into whose hands it is committed) often, to see it well done ; & that I may not be disappointed in the time allowed him for the completion which is by the 25^th of November.— The Harness is also left with him, and he has my ideas on this subject: generally they are, if the Wheel Harness (which I understand was left at New York) can be made complete, and to look as well as if they were New, then, and in that case, he is to make a set of Pole and Harness to suit them, both to be plated—but if this cannot be accomplished, the set is to be made entirely new, and in the stile.[1]—

I have requested Col^o Biddle to take measures for laying in wood for

1 Soon after entering upon the duties of the presidency at New York, Washington ordered a fine coach from England, in which, towards the close of his residence there, he often rode with his family, attended by outriders. It was drawn by four, and sometimes by six, horses. Lossing gives the following description of it : "This coach was one of the best of its kind, heavy and substantial. The body and wheels were a cream color, with gilt mouldings ; and the former was suspended upon heavy leathern straps which rested upon iron springs. Portions of the sides of the upper part, as well as the front and rear, were furnished with neat green Venetian blinds, and the remainder was enclosed with black leather curtains. The latter might be raised so as to make the coach quite open in fine weather. The blinds afforded shelter from the storm while allowing ventilation. The coach was lined with bright black leather ; and the driver's seat was trimmed with the same. The axles were wood, and the curved reaches iron. Upon the door Washington's arms were handsomely emblazoned, having scroll ornaments issuing from the space between the shield and the crest ; and below was a ribbon with his motto upon it—*Exitus acta probat*. Upon each of the four panels of the coach was an allegorical picture, emblematical of one of the seasons. These were beautifully painted upon copper by Cipriani, an Italian artist. The ground was a very dark green—so dark that it appeared nearly black ; and the allegorical figures were executed in bronze, in size nine and a half by ten inches." David Clarke, who was repairing the coach, was an Englishman who settled in Philadelphia about 1783. He constructed a traveling coach for Washington and was sometimes called "Washington's coachmaker."

for me—this being, he thinks the proper time for doing it, and to draw upon you for the amount of Cost.—

The pressure of business under which I laboured for several days before I left New York, allowed me no time to inquire who, of the female Servants, it was proposed or thought advisable to remove here besides the Wives of the footmen—namely James & Fidas.— The Washer Women I believe are good, but as they, or one of them at least, has a family of children—quere whether it is necessary to incumber the March—and the family afterwards, with them ?— I neither contradict or advise the measure—your own judgment, & the circumstances of the case must decide the point:—but unless there is better reasons than I am acquainted with for bringing M^rs^ Lewis—her daughter—and their families along, they had better, I should conceive, be left:—but as I never investigated the subject I will give no decisive opinion thereon.—

As M^r^ Hyde some little time before I left New York expressed some dissatisfaction; signifiying that he could neither enjoy under the conduct of the Servants the happiness he wished; or render those services he thought might be expected from him; it might be well for you, before I am at the expence of his removal, to know decidedly, what his determination is, and his views with a respect to a continuance.— There can be no propriety in sadling me with the cost of his transportation, & that of his baggage, if he has it in contemplation to leave me at, or soon after his arrival.— And I am the rather inclined to make this suggestion *now* as time will allow you to scrutinize his accts. & to form a good comparative view of them with Francis'.— As a Steward, I am satisfied William (independent of the Woman & what her Excellence is I really know not) would be full his equal, and I think the Dinners if the Cook had more agency in the planning of them, would be better;—at least more tasty—but this M^r^ or M^rs^ Hyde's pride will not submit to.— As I have got to the end of the Paper, and am tired, I shall only add that your letter of the 3^d^ with its enclosures came safe—and that M^rs^ Washington joins me in best wishes for M^rs^ Lear & yourself— I am sincerely & affect^ly^

Y^rs^

G^o^ Washington.

P. S.

P. S. In a fortnight or twenty days from this time it is expected Mr Morris will have removed out of the House— It is proposed to add Bow Windows to the two public rooms in the South front of the House— But as all the other apartments will be close & secure the sooner after that time you can be in the House with the furniture the better, that you may be all fixed and see how matters go on during my absence.

Mount Vernon, Septr 20th 1790.

Dear Sir,

The Servant who carried my letter of the 17th to the Post Office in Alexandria returned with yours of the 12th which shall be the subject of this reply.—

Whatever Ideas, or remarks may have been excited by my going into Mr Morris's House I know not; but this I am sure of, that to do it was farthest from my expectations.— The Corporation of the City (by whom it was engaged) made attempts, it seems, to get other places, but none being to be obtained to their liking Mr Morris' was offered & accepted, subject to my decision.— To the Academy there were exceptions, which it was said could not be overcome.— To Hunters Houses there were impediments.— The Houses of Mrs Allan and Mr Guirney could not be had because Mrs Pollock (tenant in the latter) would not relinquish it—and Mr or Mrs Kepleys was found not to answer.— This, I was told, as the history of the business.—

I have not the least objection to Fidus's Wife coming to Philadelphia in the Vessel with the other Servants; nor to her continuing in the family afterwards if she chuses it & can do the duties of her station *tolerably;* because I think *he* merits indulgences.— On James account (who I also think is a very good Servant) I consent readily, if it was his expectation and wish, that his wife may accompany the Servants in the manner suggested by you—or as a House Maid if she is thought fit for it; but not being acquainted with the views of the parties (James & wife I mean) I can only say that I shall be perfectly satisfied with whatever

ever you do respecting the matter.— As I do not believe the House can be better supplied with Washer women, I think it best to bring those you have; on condition that I shall not be burthened with Fanny's Children after they arrive.— Thus much for the lower Servants & their connections.—

With respect to M^r^ Hyde & his wife, if the duties of the family are too much for *both* will M^r^ Hyde *alone* be able to discharge them?— If she quits, will not a substitute be necessary?— In that case, or in case M^r^ Hyde *acts alone*, does he expect the same wages as are now given to both?— If it is not stated in some paper handed in by M^r^ Hyde, it is nevertheless strong in my recollection, that his wife's services were stated at one, and his own at 200 dollars per ann.— I have no wish to part with M^r^ or M^rs^ Hyde; first, because I do not like to be changing;—and secondly, because I do not know where, or with whom to supply their places.— On the score of Acc^ts^ I can say nothing, never having taken a comparative view of his & Francis's; but I am exceedingly mistaken if the expences of the Second Table at w^ch^ M^r^ Hyde presides, has not *greatly* exceeded that kept by Francis; for (but in this I *may* be mistaken) I strongly suspect that *nothing* is brought to my Table of *liquors*, *fruits*, *or other things*, that is not used as *profusely* at his.— If my suspicions are unfounded, I shall be sorry for having entertained them; and if they are not, it is at least questionable whether his successor might not do the same thing;—in which case (if Hyde is honest & careful, of which you are better able to judge than I am) a change without a benefit might take place, and is not desirable, if they are to be retained on proper terms.— I say *they*, for if M^rs^ Hyde is necessary for the purposes enumerated in your letter, and the Cook is not competent to the Desert, making Cake, &c, I do not see what use Hyde, more than William, would be without her—nor do I see why *she* should execute part of *his duties* and thereby make her own too burthensome.— Francis, besides being an excellent Cook, knowing how to provide genteel Dinners, and giving aid in dressing them, prepared the Desert, made the Cake, and did every thing that Hyde & wife conjointly do;—consequently the Services of Hyde alone is not to be compared with those of Francis's; and if his Accts. exceed (in the same Seasons) those of Francis', 4 or £5 a Week, and

and at the same time appear fair I shall have no scruple to acknowledge that I have entertained much harder thoughts of the latter than I ought to have done, although it is inconceivable to me how other families on 25 h^{d} or 3000 dollars, should be enabled to entertain more Company at least more frequently than I could do for twenty-five thousand dollars, annually.—

I am glad to hear that the furniture of the large drawing room—especially the glasses—are packed in a manner which you think secure—with respect to the Table Ornaments, my opinion has been so fully given on the mode of putting them up, that I shall say nothing further on the subject in this letter; and as I presume a correspondence has been opened between M^{r} Morris & you, I have no doubt of your embracing the proper moment for their removal; & the best mode of accomplishing it.—

M^{r} Macomb may in reality be indifferent as to taking the House off your hands, but it is highly probable he will assume the appearance of it, in order to derive an advantage in the terms—therefore, as I shall have to pay rent for it until May, if he or some other does not take it, it would be well to bring him to some decision at *once*, or advertise the renting of it, & the Sale of the buildings I have put up at the same time.— You will make better terms for these than any Agent that will be left behind—and besides, it may hasten M^{r} Macomb (who, from what I have heard I am sure wants the house) by alarming his fears that others may step in.— To receive some compensation, would be better than to sink the *whole* rent, and loose the buildings which I have erected on the lots. If there is no likelihood of *my* getting a tenant for the House *you* are in would not M^{r} Macomb be glad to take it at the difference which disinterested & impartial men would fix between *it* & the House *he is in*, & for me to pay the Rent of the latter until a tenant for it could be obtained?— This would be a step gained, and is perhaps what he is driving at.—

With respect to Dingwell, I join Col^{o} Hamilton & M^{r} Jefferson in opinion that it is no more than a catch-penny plan;—yet for the reason assigned by Gen^{l} Knox I think twenty or twenty dollars may be given him; professedly for his trouble; with an assurance that it is believed

B——

B—— has meant an imposition on *him*, inasmuch as part of his information *we know* is unfounded, and are sure, from the complexion & expression of some of the letters, pretended to be received from some of the King of G. B.'s Ministers that they are spurious; yet nevertheless, as it is supposed he—Dingwell—meant well, & has been at some trouble in his report, this sum is given expressly on those Accts.—

We have all us been very well since we came to this place & all join in best wishes for you and Mrs Lear.

With sincere regard & affection

I am Yrs

G? Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon Septr 27th 1790.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you (the date I do not recollect, keeping no copies of my letters to you) I have received yours of the 17th and 20th instant, & shall answer such parts of them as require it.—

I am glad to find that the House, according to Mr Morris's notification to you, will be ready about the time you had made arrangements for the removal of my furniture—the mode of doing which, is, I am persuaded, the cheapest and best.— How have you disposed (for safety) of the Pagoda?— It is a delicate piece of stuff, and will require to be tenderly handled.—

I expected that Mr Macomb, if he found no other person was disposed to take the House off my hands, would endeavour to impose his own terms: and allowing me only £100 for Seven Months use of it, when the rent (independent of the houses I put on the lots) is £400, is a pretty strong evidence of it.— And if you do not take some measures to see what can be had for the Wash house & Stable he will impose his own terms there also.— But after all, we are in his power and he must do as he pleases with us.

As the Lustre is paid for and securely packed up, and may suit the largest drawing room at Mr Morris's, I do not incline to part with it—

The

The Franklin Stoves & other fixtures if they cannot be disposed of without loss must be brot. round with the other furniture— We may find use for them.— Such things as are freighted in the common way (if the Vessel you desired Colº Biddle to procure is unable to carry the whole) had better be of the kinds which require least care.— The Sale of the old Chariot was proper; for although the price is small it will be so much saved for the public.— If much worn or lumbering articles, could be disposed of to any tolerable account, might it not be better to sell them at New York & buy (if necessary) new ones at Philadelphia than to pay freight for them round?—

Mrs Morris has a Mangle (I think they are called) for Ironing of Clothes, which, as it is fixed in the place where it is commonly used, she proposed to leave, and take mine. To this I have no objection, provided mine is *equally* good & convenient; but if I should obtain any advantage besides that of its being up & ready for use I am not inclined to receive it.—

Mrs Washington and all of this family unite in best wishes for you and Mrs Lear and

I am Your Sincere friend and
Affectionate Servant
Gº Washington.

Mount Vernon October 3d 1790.

Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 22d ultº came safe.— I wish the information given by Mr Danl Parker to Doctr Craigee may prove true— No mention of such event is in Morris's letter to me; but the date is prior to that of Mr Parker's by six days.— The Declaration & Counter-declaration of the Ministers of Britain & Spain are published with the communication thereof to the Lord Mayor of London; and yet, it seems to be the opinion of *some* of the paragraphists, that the matter remains unsettled.— Further information (not contained in the Newspapers) of these, or any other interesting matters, you would do well to give me the earliest intelligence

ligence of.— Mr Jefferson being from New York will, more than probable, delay official advices through the Office of Foreign Affairs longer than it otherwise would be, in coming to me.—

I request after you get to Philadelphia, & previous to your arrival there, that you wd use your best endeavors to ascertain the characters, or reputation of such Schools as it may be proper to place Washington[1] at, so soon as we shall be fixed in our New habitation;—particularly if there be any fit School in the college for him, under good and able Tutors, & well attended.— His trip to Mount Vernon will be of no Service to him, but will render restraint more necessary than ever.— If the college is under *good* regulations, and have proper Tutors there for boys of his standing to prepare them for the higher branches of education quere whether it would not be better to place him in it at once?— The presumption being, that a system prevails, by which the gradations are better corrected than they are in Schools which have no correspondence with each other.— Mr S——— is a man of acknowledged abilities, but——— it may not be well perhaps to say more in a letter,—especially as his re-instatement may have given rise to a reform of that conduct wch did not escape censure formerly.—

The enclosed letters having been put under cover to me, will of course occasion delay in the receipt of them by you, & Fidas— In all yr communications respecting the Servants, no mention has been made of John's wife— What do you understand to be her plan?— Enclosed is a letter from him to her, or some friend, I suppose, of hers—and another from James to his del Toboso.—

If I have not already advised you of it, it is necessary now to do so, that Mrs Stuart has paid for the tickets you purchased for her and Mrs Alexander,—that was—

When you can get at the last letter, or letters of the Count de Estaing to

1 Meaning George Washington Parke Custis, the grandson of Mrs. Washington. She was born in 1732 and married Daniel Parke Custis in 1749. They had four children, of whom two died in infancy. Martha Parke Custis was born in 1755 and died in her seventeenth year. John Parke Custis, the son, born in 1753, married Eleanor Calvert, and had four children. He was serving under Washington as an aide when Cornwallis surrendered, October 19, 1781, and died November 5, 1781. General Washington immediately adopted his two youngest children, Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis. Eleanor was born at Abingdon, Va., in March, 1779, married Lawrence Lewis, Washington's favorite nephew, in 1799, and died July 15, 1852. She was greatly beloved by Washington and was one of the most beautiful women of her time. Her brother was born at Mt. Airy, Md., April 30, 1781, and died at Arlington House, on the Potomac, October 10, 1857. After the death of his sister in 1852, he was the sole surviving member of Washington's family, and for many years his residence was a favorite resort, owing to the interesting relics of the family which it contained. His estate is now the site of Arlington cemetery. In early life he married Mary Lee Fitzhugh, and his daughter, Mary Randolph Custis (1806–1873), married Robert E. Lee, in June, 1831.

to me, I wish you would send me a transcript of what he says, or whether anything, of a Bust he has sent me of Mr Necker,[1] together with a number of prints of that Gentleman and the Marquis de la Lafayette which are come to my hands in a package from Baltimore. We all join in best wishes for you & Mrs Lear and I am

Yr Sincere friend
and affecte Servt
G? WASHINGTON.

MR LEAR.

Mount Vernon Octr 10th 1790.

Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 26th & 30th of the last, & 3d of the present Month, have duly come to hand.—

Without entering into the details, I can assure you that I am perfectly satisfied with the steps you have taken respecting the Vessel which is to bring the furniture & Servants to Philadelphia— With your agreements with Mr Macomb, & whatever you shall do with the Houses I was compelled to build, on his Lots.— With your conduct towards, & agreement with Mr & Mrs Hyde.— And with your taking the Carpeting from Barry & Rogers, although it arrived much after the time it ought, by agreement, to have been delivered.— As Mr Macomb will, more than probable, get the Houses for little or nothing, you acted very properly I think in taking down the Closets, partitions & fixtures which I purchased of the French Minister and which would have been equally convenient to him rather than encrease his gain at my loss.— If the Vessel will bring them, they can unquestionably, be made useful in our intended habitation—if not they will probably fetch something.

The easy and quiet temper of Fanny is little fitted I find for the care of

1 James Necker was the French minister of finance when the revolution broke out in France in 1789. He was a native of Geneva, Switzerland, and went to France as ambassador for the republic. In 1765 he obtained the office of syndic to the East India Company, and in 1775 was made director of the royal treasury. He exhibited great ability, and twice, though a foreigner, was prime minister of France. He was popular with the people at the breaking out of the revolution, but fearing a change in public sentiment returned to Switzerland, where he remained till his death in 1804, aged 72. His daughter married Baron de Staël Holstein, a Swedish ambassador at the court of France. She was the Madame de Staël, well known in the world of letters. Count D'Estaing was born in Ruvel, Auvergne, France, in 1729. He became vice-admiral in the French navy in 1767. He had twice commanded a French fleet on our coast, in co-operation with American land forces, during the war for independence. He became a member of the Assembly of Notables in the early part of the French revolution and in 1792 was chosen admiral. Being suspected of an unfriendly feeling towards the Terrorists, he was destroyed by the guillotine April 28, 1794.

of my Niece Harriot Washington[1], who is grown almost, if not quite a Woman; & what to do with her at the advanced *size* she is arrived at, I am really at a loss.—Her age (just turned of 14) is not too great for a Boarding School, but to enter *now* with any tolerable prospect, the Mistress of it must not only be respectable, but one who established & will enforce good rules.— She is prone to idleness, & having been under no controul, would create all the difficulty.— I have formed no resolution respecting what will be proper for me to do with her; but that I may the better judge, I request that you will enquire whether there be a *proper* School (for her to *board* at) in Philadelphia.— If so, whether there are at it, genteel girls of her size & age.—Who the Mistress of it is,—what her character —Terms &c are—the numbers at it,—who of the principal families and how they are entertained & accomodated.— I have not intimidated anything of this matter to Harriot as yet; who, if it should be, would I dare say be a good deal alarmed as she had, I dare say, rather mix with other company than be in a Boarding School.— Among other things, enquire what is taught at these Schools.— I must further desire, that, in pursuing your enquiries after a School for Washington, particularly if one is to be found in the College at Philadelphia fit for him; that you would extend them to the reputation of the higher branches in that Seminary; & whether much good could be expected from my fixing my Nephews George & Lawrence in it.— From what I can find they are doing but little in Alexandria, having left the study of the Languages, & indeed Mr McWhir, and are learning French & the Mathematics under a Mr Harrow.— George & indeed Lawrence, I am told are well disposed Youths—neither of them wanting capacity; and both, especially the first, very desirous of improvement.—I would wish to know what their Studies & board would stand them annually.— In a word, the best estimate (exclusive of Cloaths) the expence of fixing them at that place.—

As I have no account yet of what has been done, or is doing to our new habitation, or what ideas to annex to Mr Morris' information to you, that the House would not be ready for your reception before the 10th of the present Month, I should be glad to receive a full statement of these matters as soon as you arrive at Philadelphia & have time to look into things. We

1 Harriet Washington was the daughter of George Washington's brother Samuel. She lived at Mount Vernon several years.

We all join in best wishes to you & Mrs Lear—and for your & the safe arrival of everything in Philadelphia.

With sincere regard and Affecn

I am, Yours

Go. Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon Octr 27th 1790.

Dear Sir,

On Sunday last I returned from a twelve days excursion up the Potomack & found your letters of the 6th & 10th from New York, and the 14th & 17th from Philadelphia.— I am very glad to hear that you are all arrived at the latter place safe—and the furniture, as you conceive, in good order.— It was very right to give Johns wife the same privilege that was allowed to others, and Mr & Mrs Hyde's coming in the stage is equally agreeable to me.—

I have no particular directions to give respecting the appropriation of the furniture.— By means of the Bow windows the back rooms will become the largest, & so of course will receive the furniture of the largest dining & drawing rooms, & in that case, although there is no closet within the former, there are some in the Steward's room directly opposite which are not inconvenient; or (but here I am speaking somewhat at random, not knowing to what use it has hitherto been applied) there is a small room adjoining the Kitchen (by the Pump) that might if it is not essential for other purposes be appropriated for the Images, Sèvres China[1], and other things of this sort which are not in common use.— Mrs Morris who is a notable lady in family arrangements, can give you much information in all the conveniences about the House & buildings; and I dare say

1 Undoubtedly Washington referred to the sets of china that had been presented, one to himself and the other to Mrs. Washington, by the officers of the French army. Lossing says: "The former was a dull white in color, with heavy and confused scroll and leaf ornaments in handeaux of deep blue, and having upon the sides of the cups and tureens, and in the bottom of the plates, saucers, and meat dishes, the Order of the Cincinnati, held by Fame, personated by a winged woman with a trumpet. These designs were skillfully painted in delicate colors. These sets of china were presented to Washington and his wife at the time when the elegant and costly Order of the Cincinnati was sent to him. The set of china presented to Mrs. Washington was of similar material, but more delicate in color than the General's. The ornamentation was also far more delicate, excepting the delineation of the figure and Cincinnati Order on the former. Around the outside of each cup and tureen, and the inside of each plate and saucer, is painted in delicate color, a chain of thirteen large and thirteen elliptical links. Within each large link is the name of one of the original thirteen states. On the sides of the cups and tureens, and in the bottom of each plate and saucer is the interlaced monogram of Martha Washington enclosed in a beautiful green wreath, composed of the leaves of the laurel and olive. Beneath this is a ribbon, upon which is ioscribed, in delicately traced letters, *Decus et tutamen ab illo*. From the wreath are rays of gold, which give a brilliant appearance to the pieces. There is also a delicate colored stripe around the edges of the cups, saucers, and plates."

say would rather consider it as a compliment to be consulted in these matters (as she is so near) than a trouble to give her opinion of them or in putting up any of the fixtures as the House is theirs & will revert to them with the advantages or disadvantages which will result from the present establishment of things.— I am very glad you pressed them not to incommode themselves by an inconvenient remove— We are very happy to hear of her recovery, & request you to present our compliments of congratulation to her & Mr Morris on the occasion.—

I am very anxious to have the Rent which I am to pay for my new residence ascertained before I take up my quarters in it— You will perceive by the enclosed answer to a letter I wrote to Mr Morris on the subject that this point is yet unsettled.— Previous to my application to Mr Morris, I was informed by the Committee with whom I had conversed on the subject that it was well understood I was to pay rent— I have therefore to request that you will get the matter fixed in some way or other with them.— A just value I am willing to pay—more I have no idea will be asked but my fears rather are that they want to make it the expence of some public body (which I shall not consent to) and that they do not care to avow it.—

If the Servants can be conveniently accomodated without using the Stable loft it will certainly be much the best & safest; for I am certain no orders given to my people wd restrain them from carrying lights if they were to be in it as lodgers.—

I send you a letter with the Bill of loading for wines shipped by Fenwick, Mason &c which, if arrived you will give the necessary orders about.— By return of the person who carries this & other letters to the Post Office in Alexandria I expect to receive accounts of later date than the 17th from you; and, possibly, something more indicative of Peace, or War between Spain & England which has hung long in suspence.— Our best wishes attend you and Mrs Lear and

I am Dear Sir

Yr affect. friend

Go. Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon Oct^{r} 31st 1790.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter of the 24th since the date of my last to you; and am very glad to hear that the most valuable parts of the furniture have borne their transportation without receiving damage, and that your expectation of equal success with respect to the remainder, is sanguine.— I am pained, however, to find there is a doubt that the House will not be completely finished & ready for our reception towards the latter end of next month.— At all times this would be attended with inconvenience, but at *that* season, & while Congress *are in Session*, it would be exceedingly so.— As the Pagoda can be put up in half an hour, at any time, it may (if not already disposed of) remain unfixed until we arrive; and, that I may be in Philadelphia in time, it is my present intention to leave this place on Monday the 22^{d} of next Month.— I could not *clearly* understand Col^{o} Van Horne when I applied to him (as I came through Baltimore) for a *proper & convenient* Stage Coach for part of the family to return in.— He said he *could* provide, & *would* provide, & so on, but altho' he wanted to convey the idea of a certain reliance on him, it did not appear clear to me that I could rely on him for more than the *common* Stage Coach or Waggon;—this being the case, and the driver who brought us hither being desirous of coming for us again, adding, that he could always get a freight to Alexandria, induces me to request that you would, as his was a large & roomy *close* Coach, his Horses good, & himself a careful driver, make enquiry (without entering into any engagement with the Proprietor) whether the *same* Coach, Horses & Man could be had; and whether he wd. *positively* engage to be here on the 20th or 21st of Nov^{r} if after hearing from you, I should request it.— The terms on which he would come must be explicitly defined, that I may, without delay, return a precise answer.— You will readily perceive, that I do not mean to place my sole dependence upon this Stage.— No: I shall by this conveyance, *also* write to Col^{o} Vanhorne to know what absolute dependence may be placed on him.— Thus by having two Strings to my bow I may chuse the one which promises best.— You will readily perceive also, that there is no time

time to spare in my hearing from *you*—*you* from *me*—and for the Coach to be here in time.— Col° Biddle can point out to you the man, who ought to know that his terms should be moderate, because Col° Vanhorne's (as Horses will go from Stage to Stage only) must be lower than the last trip cost me.—

I should conceive that, a wreath round the Crests that will be on the panels of the Coach, would be more correspondent with the Seasons wch. will remain thereon, than the Motto[1].— And that the Motto on such of the Plates as require it upon the Harness w[d] be best but as this is mere matter of opinion, unaccompanied with a view of the work, I am so far from being tenacious of it that I shall leave it to you & him (Clarke) to adopt which of the two shall appear best, when the whole is taken into one view.— What appearance does the Coach assume at present?—and how will it look when finished?

Is M[rs] Brodeau's terms such as do actually exist—or, does she mean to avail herself of the occasion to commence a new æra in them?—they (especially the Board) appear to be high.— Pray, without giving any expectation of Harriot to either, for I have decided nothing respecting her—know what are M[rs] Pines terms.— M[rs] Brodeau was, I understand, one of M[rs] Morris's family—this may occasion a predilection in that quarter—M[rs] Pines' standing in that way not being long, little may be said of her on that account, but she may be equally capable—& possibly more respectable than the other.—

Let us know what answer was given or notice taken of the Extract which you have sent me from the letter of Count de Estaing when he was written to on the subject.— I fear I might not have been sufficiently polite & thankful for his present, as the thing itself has entirely escaped me, & the Box with the Prints scarcely brought any recollection of the circumstances to my mind.—

I have heard nothing yet of Capt[n] Vance, but am glad you sent the Sugar.— By mistake, a letter from James Tilghman, Esq[r], respecting a Legacy

1 The change here suggested in the emblazoning was made and instead of the entire coat of arms on the doors, the crest only was retained. When the effects of Washington were sold after his death, this coach was purchased by Mr. Custis of Arlington and in later years it became the property of the Right Rev. William Meade, bishop of Virginia. When it began to decay, he had it taken apart and broken up and the pieces were distributed and sold, the proceeds being applied to charity. About two-thirds of one of the wheels brought $140.

Legacy to Miss Anderson, from Col° Colville, was enclosed to you in my last, which I desire may be returned in your next after the receipt of this as I shall want to answ^r, even if I cannot comply with it. As we shall have new connections to form with different Tradesmen, find out those in each branch who stand highest for skill and fair dealing.— 'Tis better to be slow in chusing, than to be under the necessity of changing— and that it may be done upon sure grounds, compare one acc^t with another (for partialities, perhaps less laudable motives, mix very much in all these things) and see where the preponderancy is.—

We all join in best wishes for you and M^rs Lear & with affect^e regard I am

Y^r sincere friend,
G? WASHINGTON.

M^r LEAR.

Mount Vernon Nov^r 7^th 1790.

Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 28^th & 31^st ult. are now before me, & the parts of them w^ch require it shall be answered.—

If the Schools in the College are under good Masters, and as fit for Boys of Washington's standing as a private School, I am still of opinion (for the reasons mentioned in a former letter) that he had better be placed there in the first instance.— The propriety, however, of this will depend—1^st upon the character and ability of the Master under whose tuition he will be—2^d upon the police and discipline of the School—and 3^dly upon the number of Boys;—for I lay it down as a maxim, that if the number of the pupils is too great for the tutors, justice cannot be done, be the abilities of the latter what they will.— What the *due* proportion, beyond which it ought not to go, is in some measure matter of opinion, but an extreme must be obvious to all, & you will easily decide upon it in your own mind if nothing should be finally resolved upon by me, previous to my arrival.

Enclosed I send you a letter from M^r Gouv^r Morris with the Bill of cost of the articles he was requested to send me.— The prices of the

the plated ware exceeds—far exceeds the utmost bounds of my calculation; but as I am persuaded he has done what he conceived right, I am satisfied, and request you to make immediate payment to Mr Constable if you can raise the means.— The duties are also to be paid. You will see by the enclosed (left open for your perusal) that I have promised this.— Ought not the Sum remitted by Colo Humphreys to Mr Morris to be deducted?— Make this, without creating any difficulty, the subject of arrangement with Mr Constable.— As these Coolers are designed for warm weather, & will be, I presume, useless in cold, or in that which the liquors does not require Cooling;—quere, would not a stand like that for Castors, with four apertures for as many different kinds of liquors, just sufficient (each aperture) to hold one of the Cut decanters sent by Mr Morris, be more convenient for passing the Bottles from one to another, than handling each bottle separately; by whh it oftens happens that *one* bottle moves, *another* stops, & *all* are in confusion?— Two of these, one for each end of the Table, with a flat Bottom with or without feet, (to prevent tilting)—open at the sides, but with a raised Rim as Castors have and an upright by way of handle in the middle, could not cost a great deal were they made wholly of Silver.— Talk to a Silver Smith & know the cost—& whether they could be immediately made, if required in a handsome fashion.— Perhaps the Coolers sent by Mr Morris may afford ideas of taste—perhaps too (if they are not too heavy when examined) they may supersede the necessity of such as I have described, by answering the purpose themselves.— Four dble flint glasses (such I expect Mr Morris has sent) will weigh, I conjecture, 4lb; the wine in them when full, will be 8lb more; these *added* to the weight of the Coolers, will, I fear, make these latter too unwieldly to pass; especially by Ladies, which induced me to think of a frame in the form of Castors; wch by being open at bottom wd save Silver[1].

I approve—at least till inconvenience or danger shall appear—of the large table ornaments (images) remaining on the Side-boards; & of the

1 Washington's suggestion was adopted and Mr. Lear ordered a silversmith to make two of the caster-like frames of solid silver, and these were used when the President gave his first dinner to the officers of government and their wives and other distinguished guests. Lossing says: "Their lightness and convenience commended them, and from that time they became fashionable, under the appropriate title of *coasters*. Thenceforth the wine cooler was left upon the sideboard, and the coaster alone was used for sending the wine around the table. For more than a quarter of a century afterwards, the coaster might be seen upon the table of every fashionable family in Philadelphia. Few persons, however, are aware that Washington was the inventor of it."

the Pagoda's standing in the smallest drawing Room as you may have fixed it.— Had I delivered any sentiment from hence respecting the fixture, that is the apartment I sh^d have named for it.— Whether the Green which you have, or a new yellow Curtain, sho^d be appropriated to the Stair case above the Hall, may depend upon your getting an *exact* match in colour &c of the latter.— For the sake of appearances one w^d not, in instances of this sort, regard a small additional expence.—

If the Servants can be accomodated without the rooms which were intended for them at the end of the Hall, the use you propose to put them to is certainly a good one.— But what is to become of Phidas and James' wives?— Is it not their wishes to have their wives (if they incline to act as House Maids) with them?—and will not the contrary be a foundation for the loss of their Husbands?—

I hope my Study (that is to be) will be in readiness against I arrive.— And if the Rubbish and other litter occasioned by the People of Mortar, & the Carpenters, is at a stand, I wish that everything of the sort may be removed, and the yard made & kept as clean as the Parlour.— This was always the case in M^rs Morris's time, and has become *more* essential now, as the *best* rooms are *now* back, and an *uninterrupted* view from them into the Yard & Kitchen, which is nearly upon a level with the Dining Room.

I am really sorry—on public as well as private acc^ts—to hear of M^r Hares loss.— You w^d do well to lay in a pretty good stock of his, or some other Porter.— As M^rs Washington writes to M^rs Lear I shall add my best wishes to her only & affectionate regards to you—being

Y^r sincere friend

G^o WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon Nov^r 14^th 1790.

(Private.)

Dear Sir,

Having wrote two letters to you on the subject of Page's Stage Coach (one or the other of which, if not both, it is presumable will certainly

tainly have got to hand before this can) I shall add no more thereto than that, the Coach of Page, is *now* my dependence.—

I am, I must confess, exceedingly unwilling to go into a house without first knowing on what terms I do it; and wish that this sentiment could, in a delicate way, be again hinted to the parties concerned with me.— I cannot, if there are no latent motives wh^h govern in this case, see any difficulty in the business.— M^r Morris has, most assuredly formed an idea of what ought—in equity—to be the Rent of the tenement in the condition he left it; and with this aid, the Com^ee I conceive ought to be as little at a loss in determining on the terms it should rent for, with the additions & alterations which are about to be made;—presumably in a plain and neat manner—not by any means in an extravagant stile, because the latter is not only contrary to my wishes, but would in reality, be repugnant to my interest & convenience;—principally, because it would be a means of keeping me from the use & comforts of the House to a later day; and because the furniture and everything else would require to be accordant therewith besides its making *me pay* an extravagant price perhaps, to suit the taste of others;—to comply with reasonable charges of the workmen—or to be taxed with the blended expences of the two Houses (if they sometimes work at one, & sometimes at the other).— I do not know, nor do I believe that anything unfair is intended by either M^r Morris or the Committee,—but let us for a moment suppose that the rooms (the new ones I mean) should be hung with tapestry or a very rich and costly paper (neither of w^ch would suit my present furniture)—that costly ornaments for the Bow windows—extravagant Chimney pieces, &c, &c, were to be provided—that workmen were to charge a pound for that, which ought not to cost ten shillings;—and that advantage would be taken of the occasion to new-paint every part of the House, Buildings, &c, would there be any propriety in adding ten, or 12½ p^r Cent for all these, to the rent of the house in its original state, for the two years that I am to hold it?— If the solution of these questions are in the negative, wherein lyes the difficulty of determining that the Houses & lots when completed, agreeably to the plan proposed, ought to Rent for so much?— After all is done that can be done, the residence will not be so commodious as the house I left in New York

New York (with the buildings I added); for there—(& the want of it at Mr Morris's will be found a serious inconvenience)—my office was in a front room below, where persons on business immediately entered; whereas in the present case, they will have to ascend two pairs of Stairs, and to pass by the public Rooms as well as private chambers, to get to it;—notwithstanding which, I am willing to allow as much as was paid to Mr Macomb,—& shall say nothing if more is demanded—unless there is apparent extortion; and that the policy of delay is to see to what height Rents will rise before mine is fixed.— In either of these cases I should not be pleased,—and to occupy the premises at the expence of any public body *I will not*.[1]— There is one expression in your letter of the 4th the meaning of which is somewhat doubtful—viz—"The additions, repairs, &c of the house in which Mr Morris now lives, are likewise to be comprehended in the expenditures to be refunded by the Rent of this House."— Is it meant by this that the Rent of the House I am to go into is to be *encreased* by the expenditures on the one Mr Morris has removed to, or that the Rent of the first is to be considered as a *security* only for payment of the latter?— If this is all, I have nought to say against it.— But dire necessity would only induce me to submit to the other.— We all unite in best wishes for you and Mrs Lear and I am

Yr Sincere and
Affectionate friend
Go. Washington.

Tobias Lear, Esqr

1 As these letters show, Washington was greatly concerned regarding the rent of Robert Morris's house, which had been fitted up for his occupancy. Various cities earnestly desired to be chosen as the permanent seat of the government and the strife soon became very bitter. Indeed, it was feared that the Union itself might fail. As early as December, 1788, the legislature of Virginia had offered to present to the United States a tract of land ten miles square, anywhere within the bounds of that commonwealth. Maryland made a similar offer. The residents of New York, Lancaster, Princeton and Annapolis urged their claims upon the congress. The people of Trenton, N. J., petitioned to have the capital there, while the people of Philadelphia, elated at the action of congress in removing from New York, were determined that Philadelphia should be selected. Some representatives, learning that Wright's Ferry, now Wrightsville, on the Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania, was the nearest to the center of population and wealth, declared that it would remain so indefinitely and the house passed a resolution making this place the national capital. The senate amended by inserting Germantown; the house refused to concur and the controversy continued. Meanwhile Alexander Hamilton had been insisting that the Federal government should assume the debts of the several states which had come as legacies of the Revolution and which, he declared, constituted the "price of liberty." Though beaten on this point, the congressmen from the North were strong enough to prevent the selection of a Southern city as the national capital, and suggested a compromise. At length one was agreed upon; the nation assumed the debts of the states and on July 16, 1790, congress passed an act which provided "that a district of territory not exceeding ten miles square, to be located on the river Potomac at some place between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and Conogocheague be accepted for the permanent seat of the government of the United States." The necessary cessions of land were made by Virginia and Maryland, the survey was made, and on March 30, 1791, the President issued a proclamation making known the bounds of the Federal district. For ten years, pending the erection of suitable buildings, Philadelphia was to remain the national capital. One of the plans of those residents of Philadelphia who were determined that their city should be chosen as the permanent capital was to provide the residence for the President, thinking if they could pay the rent they would have a powerful argument on their side. Washington, of course, was aware of this, would not be a party to the scheme, and was determined to occupy an independent position. No doubt, too, he favored another location. The rent for Morris's house was finally fixed at $3,000 and on November 22, 1790, Washington left Mount Vernon accompanied by Mrs. Washington and Master and Miss Custis. They traveled in a coach drawn by four horses and reached Philadelphia on the 28th. Mr. Lear had brought the furniture from New York, purchased some in Philadelphia, and had arranged the house to the satisfaction of the President and his wife.

George Town March 28th 1791.

Dear Sir,

Late this afternoon your letters of the 23d & 24th instant came to hand, and as the Mail is about to be closed (leaving this before sun rise in the morning) I shall, as I must, be short.

I return some letters to be filed;—one from Colo Blaine to be given to Genl Knox, to be acted upon as he pleases;—he is as well acquainted with the man as I am, & knows the want of such a character better than I do;—another letter from Colo Cannon, which I may venture to say proves him to be, what I will not call him; and, that I need never look for any Rents from him.— I pray you to say to him, if he does not come to Philadelphia during my absence, that his *own* statement—given in at New York—does not justify his prest report—and that I am too well acquainted with the prices of grain and the demd for it last year in his own neighbourhood to be imposed upon by such a tale as his letter exhibits.— In a word, that I am by no means satisfied with his treatment of me;— for sure I am I shall get nothing from him but *assurances* of improvements, whilst he is either applying my rents to his own use—or suffering the tenants to go free from the payment of them.

One of the Pads to the Waggon harness was left, it seems, at Mr Clark's—send it by the Stage to Alexandria;—if it comes too late the matter will not be great.— I am not able to say yet, how long I shall be detained in this place—where I arrived before breakfast this morning.

I am—Your affecte

Go. Washington.

P. S.—I send with my best remembrance a Sermon for Mrs W——n— I presume it is good, coming all the way from New Hampshire, but do not vouch for it not having read a word of it.— It was one of your enclosures.—

Mount Vernon April 3d 1791.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you—from George Town—I have, I believe, received your letters of the 23d, 24th, & 27th ult.

Whether

Whether a certain Gentleman is the man I conceived him to be, or such a one as is hinted at in the letter you enclosed me, is not yet certain; but, admitting the latter, it is too late to look back.— I cannot be in a less productive situation by the engagement than I was;—the principal disadvantage resulting from it will be, that I can never count upon the payments until they are actually made;—consequently, can never speculate upon the money which I wished to have done.—If I recollect rightly, there is something in Col° Cannons letter (transmitted to you) concerning the Kanhaway lands—if it is indicative of an intention to let them, or, that he conceives himself empowered to do it, I desire you will inform him of the Sale of them.—

You did well in forwarding the letters from the Western territory, although they were, upon opening of them, found to be laws only.—

Until we can restrain the turbulance and disorderly conduct of our own borderers it will be in vain I fear to expect peace with the Indians,—or that they will govern their own people better than we do our's.

M^r^ Jefferson's ideas with respect to the dispatches for me, is a very good one, & I desire it may be put into execution.— I send you some letters to file, not finding it convenient to be encumbered with them on my journey.— My best wishes attend M^rs^ Lear and I am

Y^r^ sincere friend and
Affectionate Servant,
G^o^ Washington.

Fredericksburgh June 12^th^ 1791.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday we arrived at this place in good health, but with horses much worn down.[1]— To-morrow I expect to reach M^t^ Vernon—where, even if my horses were able to proceed, I am obliged to remain until the 27^th^ instant—the day appointed by me at the last meeting, to meet the Commissioners[2] at George Town, in order to fix on the spot for the public buildings, and for other purposes, arising from the residence Act.—

I

1 During the past few weeks Washiogton had been making a tour of the Southern states.

2 The first commissioners of the new Federal district were appointed hy the President on January 22, 1791—Thomas Johnson and Daniel Carroll of Maryland, and David Stewart of Virginia.

I have, at this place, received your letter of the 30th ult; but none of an intermediate date between that of the 15th and it.—Your directions to have them sent cross-wise the Country, was unlucky—first, because there are no cross-posts.— 2d because my rout back was not irrevocably fixed—and 3d because I had, knowing these circumstances, directed from Charleston all letters which might be following me, to be returned to this place to await my call.— The slow movement of the Mail in the three Southern states prevented (I presume) these directions getting to Richmond before the letters were forwarded to Taylors Ferry—& my crossing at Carters (a ferry much higher up James River) has been the cause, or causes, I imagine, of my missing them.—

Being interrupted by visitors, I shall postpone until I arrive at Mt Vernon, further communications;—the principal, indeed the only purpose of this letter being, to advise you of my arrival at this place, and of my intended stay at Mount Vernon, for the reason which I have assigned.— My best wishes attend you, Mrs Lear & the Child; and I am sincerely & affectionately

Yrs

Go. Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon 15th June 1791.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 29th ulto I acknowledged the receipt of from Fredericksburgh—since which, another of the 5th inst has been received.—

The Commissions for Whitaker and McDonell were properly issued as those also are mentd in yr letter of the 5th—and it was on my mind, that blank Commissions signed by me, were left with you for the Officers of the Revenue Cutters;—This not being the case, quere, if there is not a necessity of sending some to me for my signature, as I shall not leave this before the 27th—may be detained at George Town two or three days—and must, afterwards, proceed slowly, on acct of the low condition of my horses.— The Secretary of the Treasury will be able to decide on this point, & I wish you to act in the matter accordingly as he shall advise you.—

you.— I find another of the Federal Judges (Hopkinson) has by his death occasioned a vacancy in the district of Pennsylvania.— As some have, & others unquestionably will apply for the appointment, I wish you would use every *indirect* means in your power, to ascertain the public opinion with respect to the fittest character as a successor to Hopkinson.— Pursue the same mode to learn who it is thought would fill the present auditors office (as *he* will be appointed Comptroler) with the greatest ability & integrity.— Several have been brought to my view for the Comptrolers place (who I suppose would accept of the Auditors) as able & meritorious characters ;—among these are the names of Mr Richmond, the present Comptroler or Auditor of Maryland—Colo Pickering, Mr Kean, Colo Drayton, a Gentn of So Carolina—Colo Forrest and others.

It is hardly to be expected by the Trustees of *any* college, that complaints will not be made by the parents or friends of the boys who go to it if they conceive they are neglected ;—and if Trustees mean to do their duty, & support the reputation of the Siminary, they ought, I am sure, to be thankful for such founded representations of neglect in the œconomy —police—or inattention of the professors & teachers.—

I am glad to hear that the affairs of our own family are going on well—and it might not be improper to hint to the Servants who are with you (before they are joined by those with me) that it will be very idle & foolish in them, to enter into any combinations for the purpose of supplanting those who are now in authority—for the attempt in the first place will be futile, & must recoil upon themselves ;—and because, admitting they were to make the lives of the present Steward and house-keeper so uneasy as to induce them to quit, others would be got to supply their places ; and such too, as would be equally, if not more rigid in the exaction of the duties required of Servants.— In a word, that these characters are indispensably necessary to take trouble off the hands of Mrs Washington & myself, & will be supported ; any attempt therefor to counteract them in the line of their duty, whilst they act agreeably to established rules, & their conduct is marked with propriety, will be considered as the strongest evidence they can give of their own unworthiness, and dispositions to be lazy, if not dishonest.— A good & faithful servant is never afraid, or unwilling to have his conduct looked into, but the reverse ; because the

the more it is inspected, the brighter it shines.— With respect to the other matters of a domestic nature—mentioned in your letter of the 5th— I shall postpone touching upon them till I see you.— We are suffering in these parts by a severe drought—grass is scarcely worth cutting—& Oats, if Rain keeps off two or 3 days longer must be ruined—corn is bad, but it is too early in the year to form an opinion of the yield of it.— Remember me to Mrs Lear and be assured of the sincere esteem & friendship of

Yr affect^{e}
G^{o} Washington.

Mount Vernon June 19th 1791.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you (from this place) I have received your letters of the 12th immediately from Philadelphia, and those of the 17th and 24th of April after their having taken a trip to the Southward.—

I find by Mrs Washington's letters that Mr Frauncis is very desirous of introducing Mrs Read into the family again; this idea it would be well for him to relinquish at once, & forever;—for, unless there are reasons inducing it, which my imagination cannot furnish, it will never happen.— Herculas can answer every purpose that Mrs Read would do, and others which she will not; and sure I am that the difference in the expence between the two will bear no comparison;—besides, supposing Mrs Read to act fairly & honestly (which by the bye I do not believe she is disposed to do) if she is not to be absolute mistress of her own conduct—in a word, uncontroulable, she would not remain in the family a month.— She would also increase the number, and of course the expence of the *second* Table; which under the administration of Mr Hyde, I believe was equal to the first (public days excepted).— But I hope it is a matter clearly understood by Mr Frauncis that Wine is not to be used at it again under any pretence whatsoever; for there can be no line drawn if it be once admitted; either as to the quantity or quality that will be drank at it.—

By the last Post, the letter of Messrs Fenwick & Mason, explanatory of the Wine from Charleston, was forwarded to you;—& I should be glad

glad that the wine was recd. in good order; for no attempts of that Ho. hitherto, seems to have succeeded well, so far as I am concerned in them.— The other Wine to Mr Jefferson will, I presume, be divided, and settled for, as soon as he shall have returned from his Northern tour.—

Without going into the detail on the several points of yr letters I can assure you that the measures you have adopted with regard to Washington—George & Lawrence—my black people—& the employment of Mr Frauncis & Mrs Emerson, as far as they have been communicated, meet my entire approbation;—and I wish you to inculcate strongly upon the white Servants of the family, (as mentioned in my last) that it will be vain & idle in them to suppose, that by a combination they will avoid their own duties—or can effect the discharge of those to whom the management of the Household business is committed.— They must be sensible, that they have as high wages as are given to any Servants in their respective stations—that they are as well provided—& perhaps *better* paid than most —and no extra duties imposed upon them; consequently, that if an attempt of this sort is made, it will recoil upon themselves.— I shall communicate the same sentiments to those who are with me, that, if they do sin, it shall be with their eyes open, and under a knowledge of the consequences.

As I shall have occasion for a number of blankets for my people this fall;—and as the best time to purchase them, I am told, is after the Winter's demand is over; I should be glad if you would make a pretty diligent enquiry after them before I arrive; that I may know *whether* and upon *what* terms, I can get supplied.— It is probable I may want near two hundred.—

The Majr desires[1] me to write for half a bushel of Turnip seed of the best kind—viz—a peck of White Summer—and the other peck of the red winter;—but a good winter and good Summer Turnip of any other kind, I suppose will do.— It must be sent soon, or both will be useless.—

I should like to see Mr Payne's answer to Mr Burke's Pamphlet;[2]— if it is to be had, & could be sent off by the Post on friday, it would meet me

1 The Major was George Augustine Washington, son of George Washington's brother Charles, and at this time was assisting in the supervision of the Mount Vernon property.

2 Referring to Thomas Paine, whose pamphlet on the "Rights of Man" was written in answer to Edmund Burke's famous letter to a French gentleman in 1790 entitled "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

me at George Town on Monday the 27th; where I shall be, & from whence I shall proceed;—but on what day is more than I am able to determine until I go there, and shall see what is necessary to be done at that place towards carrying the Law respecting the permanent residence of the Government into effect.— To do this, there are many matters to decide upon; and some of them not a little difficult.— It is not very probable therefore that I shall leave George Town before Thursday; but I would not have such dependence placed on this, as to *expect* letters will meet me there on Wednesday evening;—especially as it is in distant contemplation (if upon enquiry at George town it shall be found that the difference in the length of the two roads is not great) to return by the way of Frederick town, York & Lancaster, to Philadelphia.

Paris has become so lazy, self willed & impudent, that John (the Coachman) had no sort of government of him;—on the contrary, Jno. says it was a maxim with Paris to do nothing he was ordered, and every thing he was forbid.— This conduct, added to the incapacity of Giles for a Pistilion, who I believe will never be able to mount a horse again for that purpose, has induced me to find Paris some other employment than in the Stable—of course I shall leave him at home.— A boy, or two may be necessary there, to assist about the horses—Carriages—& harness—but these (dutch ones) it is possible may be had for their victuals & cloaths; especially if there are large importations from Germany (as some articles in the papers say there will be).— I mention the matter now, that in case arrivals should happen before I get back, of these kind of People, you may be apprised of my wishes—low and squat (well made) boys, would suit best.— If emigrants are not to be had, there can be no doubt, but that some of the Dutch Servants in the family could easily procure such as are wanted from among the Citizens—& perhaps none readier, or better than by John himself when he arrives.— Remember me to Mrs. Lear—and be assured of the esteem and regard of

Yr affecte

Mr Lear. Go. Washington.

Mount Vernon Septr. 26th 1791.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you I have received your two letters of the 21st instant; one dated in the morning, and the other in the evening of that day.—

What appeared to *you* to be the object of the formal enquiries of Mr Powell and the Mayor of the City, in their late interrogatories?— Did they mean to convict Mr Gallatine of mis-representation—or me of an improper interference in the building of the House for the President of the United States?— If the first, Mr Gallatine may speak for himself;— If the latter, I have no scruple in declaring to those Gentlemen or to any others that no one has a right to publish sentiments *as mine* that were never uttered, or conceived *by me;*—especially too after the reverse had been explicitly declared to Mr Fisher at his own request wch. was made as he *professed* to answer a particular purpose.— Previous to the above communication to Mr Fisher, I do not recollect that I ever expressed a sentiment respecting the public building.— To a Pennsylvanian, or one wishing to promote the measure, I am certain I never did:—but *afterwards*, when I found my want of accomodation & consequent dissatisfaction was adduced as argument to support the measure, I was inclined that the following truth should be known—first, that I never had, since I got rid of the workmen, expressed any dissatisfaction with my accomodations.— Secondly, That as I have already made *two* expensive removals, and had not long to remain in office, I would not make a third, unless I was compelled to do it—and thirdly, under these circumstances, and a thorough conviction that the proposed building might be delayed, and still erected in time for my Successor—It was candid and fair to make these sentiments known—especially as they were accompanied with a pointed declaration that it was *only* as the building regarded *myself personally* that they were communicated; having no desire to intermeddle in the politics of the State.—

I am glad you stated the matter in writing to Mr Powell.— Sentiments, and communications expressed in that manner, cannot be misconceiv'd or mis-represented, from the want of recollection.— I hope there

there is no intention of adding near 50 p^{r} C^{t} to the Rent of the House I occupy; for I *well* remember my desiring you to inform the Committee that I *must* and *would* know upon what terms I was to Inhabit the House and y^{t} you told me they had fixed the Rent at £500 p^{r} Ann.—

If you have not already made a purchase of Blankets, I wish you to suspend doing it until you hear from me again.— I am about to send this day to Alexandria, where it is said large importations of this article have been made, to learn the qualities, and price of the Dutch Blanketing.— Sitgreaves Mem^{o} is not explicit enough to enable me to judge of the size, or quality of his— The only sort of them which are applicable to my use, are inserted thus "Striped Duffells 115/ to 180/ per piece of 15 blankets"; this brings the lowest of these to 9/ & the highest to 12/ each which is high, supposing them of the largest size, & of the first quality.— If you will mention in your next the length & breadth of the different sizes, & whether they are of the best quality, I shall be better able to decide.—

I do not recollect whether I mentioned to you in my last that the Major got home a day or two before us— He is much better than he was; but not yet free from the pain in his breast & Cough.—

M^{rs} Washington and all the family (which at present is pretty numerous) join me in best wishes for yourself, M^{rs} Lear, Maj^{r} Jackson & the Child.

I am, Dear Sir
Your sincere friend
and affect^{e} Servant,
G^{o} Washington.

Mount Vernon Oct^{r} 2^{d} 1791.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you, which I think was written on this day week, I have received your letters of the 25th and 27th ult^{o}.

I am not yet enabled to speak decisively with respect to the Blankets.— Many have arrived, but are not yet opened, in Alexandria.— M^{r} Wilson


Mount Vernon

PRIVATE PLATE

Mr Wilson, who has imported of them largely, at from 56/ to 75/ sterg. pr piece of 15 blankets; has offered them to me at 70 pr Ct but as he cannot before they are opened give the size, or quality, it is impossible to say whether they will come cheap or dear.— I shall ascertain this matter before Friday next & will then write you on the subject again.—

Letters & Papers from you by the Posts on Wednesdays & Fridays will come to me as soon as those which may be forwarded on Mondays, as I do not send to the Office on Wednesdays; which is the day the Mail arrives there that leaves Philadelphia on Monday.— Those which leave that place on Wednesday comes in on Friday—and the Friday's mail arrives on Monday & these are the days I shall send up for letters &c.

I send two French letters to be translated & forwarded to me.—

It is a little singular, when considered on the score of candor, that Mr P——— should suffer Mr S——— to assert what he did in the S——— without contradicting him;—but the views, and conduct of the City Influence stands in need of no development in my mind.— Nor have I a much higher opinion of the candor of Mr F———. He is very welcome however to the copy of the letter you wrote to Mr P. & with which you furnished him, as I wish the sentiments therein expressed to be *generally* known; since the matter has been introduced into the Legislature of the State, & so unfairly stated, as it appears to have been done, by *both* parties.— The details you have given me of this matter was very proper, & I am glad you furnished me with them.— It is quite right that I should be made acquainted with these things.

I am very well satisfied with the determinations of the Comee respecting the Rent, and the time of its commencing; and am glad of your expression to that effect.—

How does the engraving of the Federal City advance?— Send me some of the first that are struck off & let the others be disposed of as was agreed on.— If you should learn with certainty that the Minister of France is coming to this place advise me of it and when he sets out.—

All the family here are well except the Major who seems to be in a poor way and join me in best wishes for you and yours—and for Major Jackson. I am, sincerely and affectly.,

Yours

Mr Lear. Go. Washington.

Mount Vernon Oct^{r} 7th 1791.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 30th ult^{o} came duly to hand, with the enclosures.—

I have had samples of the Alexandria Blankets sent me—the quality of them is not good; inferior to those I had from Watson—& far, very far indeed, inferior to those which I used to import myself.— The prices, length & breadth of three kinds, enclosed.—

Mess^{rs} Sitgreaves give no length to their Blankets—and if Col^{o} Biddle has been accurate in his account, and I underst^{d} him, the Blankets he has had offered to him, however good in other respects, are intolerably narrow.— Under this view of matters I am perplexed.— I by no means like the prices, or quality, of the Blankets in Alexandria; and scarcely know what judgment to form of those in Philadelphia; but if whilst hesitating between the two I should miss both, it would be bad indeed, as my people would in that case be in great distress the ensuing Winter.— Upon the whole, I have resolved to refer the matter once more to you, with the Alexandria prices and sizes (the quality you can only form an opinion of from the description I have already given) of the Blankets in that place and to request that you & Col^{o} Biddle will endeavor to procure me the quantity wanting—viz—200; if upon comparison you shall conceive I may be benefited thereby.— One hundred of the largest size, and best quality is required;—the other hundred may be of the middle size, but good in quality.— But in truth, if I am to form an opinion of the sizes by the acc^{ts} sent, the largest of them scarcely comes up to my ideas of a middle sized Blanket.— At all events let me know by the Wednesday's Post after you receive this (and which will reach me only the day before I leave home) what I have to trust to, as I shd. regret a disappointment exceedingly.

I recollect asking you, if among my Pamphlets you had seen the Journal of my tour to the French on La beauf in the year 1753?— I understood you No; but M^{rs} Washington thinks you said Yes.— I have searched in vain for it here.— Pray decide this point between us.—

As I shall have but little time between my return to Philadelphia and the meeting of Congress to arrange matters for the Communications

I

I shall have to make at the opening of the Sessions, I desire *you* will (for my time is so much occupied here by company, & the necessary attention to my domestic concerns, as not to allow me time to do it) examine my Speeches at the opening of the three last Sessions of Congress, and compare the several matters recommended in them with the Laws that have passed; noting the things recommended, and not acted upon *at all*—as also the measures recommended and taken up by Congress but *not finished;* —such as the Militia Law &c that I may, by seeing the State of the business, decide on the propriety (as I am about to meet a new House of Representatives) of bringing the same matters before Congress again.— It will do, if this enquiry is compleated against my arrival, and I pray you to be correct in it.— The Journals, or Mr Beckley, can inform you of those cases which have been taken up, but never finished; & I wish you to ask at the Secretary of State's office what has been the result of the enquiries which had issued from thence in consequence of the resolution of Congress to ascertain the quantity, and State of the Lands ceded by No Carolina.—

I ought, when speaking of the Blankets, to have desired, if you make the purchase in Philadelphia, to forward them by the first vessel which is bound to Alexandria as my Negros are all teasing me for them, and the season will soon make them necessary.—

What progress does Mr West make? and has he learnt to write with more facility and ease than when I left him?—

Mrs Washington requests you to get her Six pieces of Ginghams according to the inclosed Memm & to send them along with the Blankets.— She and all here join in best wishes for you &c—and I am ever

Yr affecte fd &c

G? Washington.

Mr Tobias Lear.

Mount Vernon Oct 14th 1791.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 9th was forwarded to me yesterday morning by the Post-Master in Alexandria (having sent no person to that place the evening before).—

I am glad of the intimation given of the intentions of the Minister of France;—and pleased, tho' distressed at the same time, at the information that, the 24th instt is the day fixed on for the meeting of Congress.— I had no more idea of this than I had of its being dooms-day.— Supposing the 31st to be the day, I meant to have spent Monday, and possibly Tuesday, at George Town; and then to have proceeded leizurely on; but as the case is I shall endeavor to reach Bladensburgh *at least*, the first night (that is Monday) and delay no time on the Road afterwards that can be avoided; as I shall have scarce any time to prepare my communications for the opening of the Session on the 24th if there should be punctuality in the Members.—

This unexpected event makes it more essentially necessary to look, without delay, & with accuracy, into the Speeches & Laws (at the past Sessions) agreeably to my former directions; that, among other matters, they may be considered of when I arrive.— If anything else should have occurred to you, fit for recommendation, or communication in the Speech, note it, that, in case it shd not be among my memorandums, it may be ready for consideration.

There is a mistery attending the engraving of the Federal City which I do not comprehend.— It appears somewhat singular that the incorrectness of the Plan should not have been discovered till now, when Major L'Enfent[1] was detained many days in Philadelphia to prepare & fit it for the purpose.—

If the Memorial of Messrs Triol Roux & Co. has not already been sent it may await my arrival in Philadelphia as I shall have no leizure to give it a consideration until after my Communications have been prepared for

1 Meaning Peter Charles L'Enfant, who was born in France in 1755, came to this country with Lafayette in 1777, and died here in 1825. He enlisted in the Continental army, rose to the rank of major, served under the immediate command of Washington, and long after the war drew the plans for the capital city.

for Congress.— Being much hurried I have only time to wish you and Mrs Lear well, & to assure you of the sincere esteem and regard of

Yrs Affectly

G? Washington.

Tobias Lear, Esqr

Mount Vernon July 30th 1792.

Dear Sir,

Your letter from New York came duly to hand, and I was glad to find you had got that far in safety.— I wish the remainder of your journey may prove equally pleasant and prosperous.— My journey was not of this sort, for after I had parted with the Coach horses I was plagued with those which succeeded them, the following day;—and the sick Mare, by a dose of Physic which had been administered the night I reached Chester, was so weakened, & failed so much, that she was unable to carry Austin any farther than Susquehanna;—from thence she was led to Hartford and left—and two days afterwards gave up the ghost.—

I found the face of the Country here, and on the road this side Baltimore, much, very much indeed, parched by a severe drought; and the Corn in miserable plight;—but the day & night we reached home there fell a most delightful & refreshing rain, and the weather since has been as seasonable as the most sanguine farmer could wish; & if continued to us may make our Indian corn crop midling—great it is hardly possible to be—so much was it in arrears when the rains set in.—

Great complaints were heard of the Hessian fly, and of the Rust or Mildew, as I travelled on; and in some places I believe the damage has been great;—but I conceive more is said than ought to be on this subject; and, that the Crop upon the whole will be abundent of Wheat;—mine in quantity (and the quality is good) will, I expect, greatly exceed any I have made these several years past.

I found at George Town many well conceived, & ingenious plans for the Public buildings in the New City:—it was a pleasure indeed, to find in an infant Country such a display of Architectural abilities.— The Plan

Plan of Mr Hoben,[1] who was introduced to me by Doctr Tucker, from Charleston, & who appears to be a very judicious Man, was made choice of for the President's House; and the Commissioners have agreed with him to superintend the building of it—& that of the Capitol also,—if they should, hereafter, be disposed to put both under one management.— He has been engaged in some of the first buildings in Dublin—appears a master workman—and has a great many hands of his own.— He has laid out the foundation which is now digging & will be back in a month to enter heartily upon the work.—The Plan for the Capitol was not fixed on when I left George Town—two or three very elegant ones (among a great many of less merit) had been presented—but the draughtsmen not being there, a postponement became necessary to receive explanations.— The Bridge will be accomplished (it is said) by the time specified in the Contract; and every thing that could be put in motion before the Plans for the public buildings were fixed on, is in as much forwardness as could be expected—& will now, I have no doubt, advance rapidly.

As you did not mention your having spoke to Mr Morris about the house, I am under some apprehension that you omitted to do it;—which will be unlucky.— Give me an Acct. of what I suggested to you as a matter for indirect enquiry.— All here are well, except the Major, whose situation I think is unpromising & precarious—growing worse—they all join me in best wishes for Mrs Lear, yourself & the Child.— I am

Dr Sir Yr affectc friend

Go. Washington.

Mount Vernon, Sepr 21st 1792.

Dear Sir,

I have written but one letter to you since I came to this place— I was on the point of writing a second when yours of the 5th of August came to my hands informing me of your intention to leave Portsmouth about the first of this month and expectation of reaching Philadelphia (if no

1 Meaning James Hoban. He was a native of Ireland and settled in Charleston before the Revolution. He was employed in July, 1792, as architect and superintendent and received a compensation of 300 guineas a year. He not only drew the plans of the President's house, which was first occupied by President John Adams in November, 1800, but supervised the construction of other public buildings.

no unforseen delays happened) the 20th— This information arrested my intention, as it was uncertain at what place to direct to you—or, that the letter would reach your hands before it re-verberated back to that City.

I feel myself much obliged by the information contained in your letters of the 21st of July and 5th of August;—but as I expect soon to see you I shall only take notice of that part of it which respects a tutor for a few boys, and my ardent wish that you may have been able to succeed in your expectation of getting one.— I am more and more persuaded of the utility of the measure;—& that without it, the loss to Washington will be irreparable.—

I have nothing agreeable of a domestic nature to relate, and I go not abroad to collect information of any other kind.— Poor George!— He is, I believe not far from that place, from whence no traveller returns.[1]— He is but the shadow of what he was; he has not been out of his room & scarcely from his bed these six weeks.— At times he has intervals of ease which flatter a little, but I have little hope of his surviving the Winter.— This adds not a little to my distress & perplexity on a subject you are already acquainted with—but no more of this—at least for the present.—

My family, and this part of the Country are more sickly than they have been since the recollection of the oldest of us;—first with the flux (but that did not prevail in my family) and next with intermittant & remittant fevers.— All the whites of it, however, have kept up, except William, whose fever is by an act of his own imprudence.—

Not knowing what delays you may have met with on the Road, I have directed Mr Francis in a letter of this date, to engage Mr Page's Coach to be here, to accomodate our journey to Philadelphia; for which place I expect to set *out* the 8th though I may not arrive in that City before the 13th or 14th of Oct.— The Stage however is to be at this place on the 7th at Night.— If you should be in Philadelphia by the time this letter reaches it, I shall rely on your usual punctuality & exertion to effect this.— If the Carriage should not be here before the 8th the case will not be altered, as I do not expect Mrs Washington will leave this place before the

1 George Augustine Washington—referred to heretofore in these letters as the Major—son of George Washington's brother Charles.

the 9th— The Sale may require my remaining in George Town one day.—

If this letter should find you in Philadelphia, let me know the result of your application to Mr Page by the first Post after it is received.— Our united and best wishes are offered for yourself, Mrs Lear & the Child and with sincere & affectionate regard

I am always
Your friend
Gº Washington.

P. S. If Mr Page cannot send his Carriage some other equally convenient if to be had must be sent for our accomodation as it is thereon we depend.

Mount Vernon Oct^r 1st 1792.

Dear Sir,

Expecting this letter will find you in Philadelphia—I wish you w^d begin in time to compare *all* my Speeches in Congress with the subsequent Acts of that body; that I may see what parts of them have passed altogether unnoticed, or which have been only partially noticed; thereby enabling me to judge whether any, and what parts of them should be brought forward again.— It is my request also, that you would note everything that may occur to you as fit subjects of information, or for recommendation at the opening of the Session—and such other matters as result from the Laws with wch. it is proper to make the Legislature or the Senate acquainted.— I want to have all the materials collected for my Communications previous to my arrival, that when the whole are before me I may select & digest into order, such as will be proper for my Speech.

It is my present intention to commence my journey to Philadelphia on this day week; & to spend that, and part of the following day in George Town; but whether I shall be able to do it is not absolutely certain, as yet.— William and Richard have both been confined to their rooms, and mostly to their beds for ten or twelve days with intermittant fevers; which, never before yesterday, was moderate enough to admit the Bark which makes it doubtful at this moment whether they will be in condition

condition to undertake the journey if they keep well, & a return of the fever I am sure will prevent it.— As to poor George I shall say nothing— His fate is unquestionably fixed, and Fanny's from prest. appearances is very unpromising, probably terminating in the same disorder.— These occurrances throws my private affairs into considerable embarrassment.— But as they, especially the Major, is not likely to get better, and if they do will spend the Winter at her fathers, I must leave them in it, as there is no remedy at present.

The light house on Cape Henry, in this State, will soon want a Keeper, & if my memory serves me many have offered.— Pray examine the characters and have them ready to be decided on by the time I arrive.—

Mrs Washington went up this morning to bid Mrs Stuart (who has lately added a Son to the family) farewell.— My best wishes attend Mrs Lear yourself and the Child and

I am—Dear Sir
Your sincere friend
and Affecte Servant,
G? Washington.

Mr Lear.

I do hereby certify that I have examined the accounts which have been kept by Mr Tobias Lear, on my behalf, from the commencement of my Administration of the Government of the United States down to the 31st day of December One thousand seven hundred and ninety two— as will appear by the Journal & Ledger which contain them—and that I am perfectly well satisfied with the clearness and justness of them.—

Given under my hand in the City of Philadelphia this 25th day of March 1793.

G? Washington.

Mount Vernon Aprl 5th 1793.

Dear Sir,

From Baltimore I acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultº; as I am about to do that of the first instant from hence.—

I had no idea of your obtaining money from Mr de Barth, if it was even more abundant than you represent it to be—nor do I believe he had any expectation at the time we bargained to make the payment stipulated—It was, I am satisfied, a speculation on his part—depending upon the chapter of accidents to comply with.— Such was the opinion of others at the time—and such has his conduct evinced since.— The disappointment to me is great, as I wanted to apply the money to particular uses.— Public securities, (but of these I dare say he is as scarce, as he is of Cash) would do.—

Let me know in your next, after the receipt of this, what are the *real* selling prices of Flour in Philadelphia—and the opinion of the *knowing ones* whether the probability is, that it will rise, fall, or remain where it is for any time.— In this state it has fallen—but the scarcity of Cash, and War, or the probability of one between France & G. Britain, are assigned as the causes—together with the want of Vessels to export the produce of the Country.—

Offer my best wishes to Mrs Lear and our little friend Lincoln and believe me to be as I really am

Your sincere friend and
Affectionate Servant,
Gº Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon April 8th 1793.

Dear Sir,

Since my last to you from this place, your letter of 3d instt has been received transmitting Colº Cannon's Rental, and Mr de Barth's profession of inability to discharge his Bond.— The latter seems to be a more candid acct than the former; but with both, I must be satisfied—presuming, I shall never obtain better, from either.—

Before

Before you say anything to Mr C——— with respect to the lands which Mr de Barth had of me, & is willing to relinquish; I beg you to have some conversation with the Attorney General on the subject he mentioned to me respecting Mr C——— which I did not very clearly understand at the time, and know less of it now.— It seemed to squint (if I recollect rightly) at a sort of speculation which might implicate the latter; but in what manner I know not.— As I do not mean, however, to place it in the power of malice itself to charge me with any agency in measures that can even be tortured into impropriety on this head, I wish the above enquiry to be previously made.—

If it is not too late—I mean if the Assembly of Pennsylvania has not risen, & the opportunity lost—I wish you would enquire of Mr Gallitan, and others from the Western Country, into whose hands I could, to advantage, entrust the management of my business in the Counties of Fayette & Washington: for I am sure it will not do to leave it in the hands of Colo Cannon;—who, if nothing else is against him, is too dependent for his election as representative of the latter County to fix my Rents at a just medium; or to collect them in the manner he ought to do—lest his popularity should be affected by it.— And, if the Rents are liable to be applied, (when under leases for five years, & after farms have been settled 12 or 15 years) towards repairs & improvements, I may bid adieu to any prospect of profit from them; as nothing can be easier than to balance the acct. by fence rails—and other such like improvements; which every man who ever had a farm, & expected to make anything on it, always did, & for their own sakes ever will be obliged to provide for the security of their Crops at their own expence.— It is usual when a tenant goes on a *New place*, and has *every* thing to provide, to allow him one, two, and sometimes (according to situation & circumstances) three years rent free;—but I never heard before, of a continuance of it on farms so long settled as I have mentioned, & which have *always* been in occupation.— Nor is it to be sups'd that a tenant will ever do any thing at his own expence, if, by agreement, he can charge it to the account of his Landlord.—

As the Will of my deceased Nephew will not be proved at next Court for this County, I shall not (unless obliged to wait for Mr Robert Lewis,

Lewis, who has written me that he shall be here with some Rents, & to settle other business with me) remain here till Monday the 15th—but as I shall (unless advices from Philadelphia or other occurrences unknown to me at present render it inconvt.) go by the way I had contemplated to come, if the Roads would have permitted it;—that is, by Fredericktown in Maryland, Carlisle, Harrisburgh, the upper Canal, Reading and the lower Canal; it is not in my power at this time to name the day when it is probable I shall be in Philadelphia—but at any rate, if no accident happens, nor my horses fail me, it will be by the 25th of the month at farthest.—

Fanny Washington thanks you for your friendly remembrance of her & joins me in best wishes for yourself, Mrs. Lear and Lincoln.— I am always and sincerely

Yr affectᵉ friend

Gº Washington.

Mr Lear.

Philadelphia June 21st 1793.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 17th came by the Post of yesterday—and as, by the purport of it, there is a probability that this letter may find you either at George town or Mount Vernon, I write it for the purpose of declaring that, your going to the latter place is viewed by me as a very kind & friendly Act.— The Accᵗ given of Mr Whiting by Doctr Craik, is a very distressing one;—not only as it respects the poor fellow himself, but on accᵗ of the effect it must have on my business, present & to come; during this year, at least.—

Getting an accᵗ from him (if his situation will enable him to give it) of the monies received & paid, & such as may be due to & from me, is of importance.— A general view given by him of other matters, is more to be wished than expected.— I shall bring with me the account he rendered to Mr Dandridge when I was last at Mount Vernon.—

If Mr Clarke fulfils his engagement (and he says he will, tho' I think it questionable) I shall, if no business more than I am apprized of at present intervenes to prevent it, set out on my journey on Monday; & expect

expect to be at George Town, if not at Mount Vernon, on Thursday evening.— This being the case, and as I shall see you at one or the other of those places, or must meet you on the Road, I shall only add that with much truth & friendship I am

Dear Sir,
Your Affect^e^
G^o^ WASHINGTON.

P. S. M^rs^ Lear and Lincoln are perfectly well.
M^R^ LEAR.

Mount Vernon Sep^r^ 25^th^ 1793.

My Dear Sir,

I have not written to you since we parted, but had just sat down to do it when your letter of the 13^th^ inst. was brought to me from the Post Office in Alexandria.—

It gave M^rs^ Washington, myself and all who knew him, sincere pleasure to hear that our little favourite[1] had arrived safe, & was in good health at Portsmouth.— We sincerely wish him a long continuance of the latter —that he may always be as charming & promising as he now is—that he may live to be a comfort & blessing to you—and an ornament to his Country.— As a token of my affection for him, I send him a ticket in the lottery now drawing in the Federal City; and if it should be his fortune to draw the Hotel, it will add to the pleasure I feel in giving it.

We remained in Philadelphia until the 10^th^ inst^t^— It was my wish to have stayed there longer; but M^rs^ Washington was unwilling to leave me amidst the malignant fever which prevailed, I could not think of hazarding her & the children any longer by my remaining in the City— The house in which we lived being, in a manner blocked by the disorder which was becoming every day more & more fatal.— I therefore came off with them on the above day, and arrived at this place the 14^th^ without encountering the least accident on the Road.

You will learn from M^r^ Greenleaf that he has dipped deeply in the concerns of the Federal City;—advantageously I think for himself, and I am

1 Benjamin Lincoln Lear, son of Tobias Lear.

am pleased with it on public ground also; as it may give facility to the operations at that place, at the same time that it is embarking him in a measure which, although it cannot well fail under any circumstances that are likely to happen, may be considerable promoted by men of Spirit with large capitals.— He can, so much better than I, detail his engagements, & the situation of things in and about the City, that I shall not attempt to do it at present.—

Mrs Washington having decided to let Nelly Custis have her watch & Chain, is disposed to receive substitutes in lieu thereof at about Twenty five guineas price; and leaves the choice of them to you.— The plainness of the watch &c will be no objection.— One hundred and twenty dollars in Bank notes are enclosed for the purchase of them.—[1]

If it should be convenient, and perfectly safe for you to engage for me, on reasonable terms, a compleat Black Smith, you would oblige me by doing so.— As there are laws in England prohibiting such engagements under severe penalties, and such may exist in other Countries, you will understand me clearly, that, for no consideration whatsoever would I have you run the smallest risk of encountering them.— You know full well what kind of a Smith would suit my purposes—it is unnecessary therefore for me to be particular on this head.— He must, however, have a character on which you can rely not only as a compleat workman for a Farm, but as an honest, sober & industrious man.— If he comes on Wages they must be moderate; & with, or without wages he must be bound to serve me three years, four would be better.—

Mrs Washington thanks you for your kind recollection of her request respecting Lincoln, and desires me to assure you of her sincere love for him—in which I join—and of her friendship and regard for you.— In whatever place you may be, or in whatever walk of life you may move, my best wishes will attend you, for I am & always shall be

Your sincere friend and
Affectionate Servant,
Gº Washington.

P. S. I have just received a letter from the Earl of Buchan in which he says my letter intended to accompany the Portrait had got safe to his hands

1 Mr. Lear was about to go abroad.

hands, but that he had seen heard nothing of the Picture.— If you should, while in New York see the Painter of it, be so good as to mention this circumstance to him, & enquire into the cause of the failure.[1]

The District Attorney for New Hampshire has sent his resignation— I am entirely unacquainted with the characters in that line, in that State, and would thank you to name the person whom you think best qualified to succeed Mr. Sherburne, & most likely to give general satisfaction.

G. W.

Philadelphia 6th May 1794.

My Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 26th of Jany with a Postscript of the 30th of the same month, by Captn Truxton, and another of the 12th of Feby by a Vessel to New York, I have safely received.— But neither the one from Glasgow (with the box) nor the other by the Peggy, referred to in the above letters, are yet come to hand.—

The Watch, and Portrait of the Earl of Buchan, were received in very good order.— The first pleases, and for your attention to it Mrs Washington prays you to accept her thanks.— The extra cost, together with

1 The portrait to which reference is made, was painted by Alexander Robertson, who came to this country from Scotland on the invitation of Dr. Kemp of Columbia college and Chancellor Livingston of New York. Hearing of his intended departure, the Earl of Buchan requested an interview in Edinburgh and committed to his care a small box, four inches long, three broad, and two deep, and an eighth of an inch thick, made of six pieces of the heart of the oak tree that sheltered Sir William Wallace after the battle of Falkirk. This box the Earl of Buchan wished to present to General Washington, with the request for his portrait "from the pencil of Mr. Robertson." Under date of January 28, 1791, the Earl wrote to Washington: "This box was presented to me by the Goldsmiths' company of Edinburgh, of whom—feeling my own unworthiness to receive this magnificent and significant present—I requested, and obtained leave to make it over to the man in the world to whom I thought it most justly due; into your hands I commit it, requesting you to pass it, in the event of your decease, to the man in your own country, who shall appear to your judgment to merit it best, upon the same considerations that have induced me to send it to your Excellency." The Wallace box had an elegant silver binding, and the lid, opening on hinges one-third down the side, had a silver plate inside, inscribed: "Presented by the Goldsmiths of Edinburgh to David Stuart Erskine, Earl of Buchan, with the freedom of their Corporation, by their Deacon, 1791." On the death of Washington, the box was returned to the Earl of Buchan, or his heirs, according to the following clause in Washington's will: "To the Earl of Buchan I recommit the 'box made of the oak that sheltered the brave Sir William Wallace after the battle of Falkirk,' presented to me by his lordship in terms too flattering for me to repeat, with a request 'to pass it, on the event of my decease, to the man in my country who should appear to merit it best, upon the same conditions that have induced him to send it to me.'— Whether easy or not, to select the man who might comport with his lordship's opinion in this respect, is not for me to say; but conceiving that no disposition of this valuable curiosity can be more eligible than the recommitment of it to his own cabinet, agreeably to the original design of the Goldsmith's company of Edinburgh, who presented it to him, and, at his request, consented that it should be transferred to me—I do give and bequeath the same to his lordship; and, in case of his decease, to his heir, with my grateful thanks for the distinguished honour of presenting it to me, and more especially for the favourable sentiments with which he accompanied it."

When Robertson was ready to execute his commission for the Earl of Buchan he spent six weeks at the residence of President Washington. He made his first attempt in miniature and in water colors. At the same time he painted a miniature of Mrs. Washington. These he retained, leaving them "to remain in his family as an heirloom, and memorial of his veneration for the great and successful champion of American liberty." After succeeding happily in miniature, Robertson painted (in May, 1792,) a large portrait in oil, corresponding in size to those of a collection of portraits of the most celebrated characters in liberal principles and in useful literature, in the possession of Lord Buchan, at Drybergh Abbey. When finished, the portrait received Washington's approval; he said: "The manner of the execution of it does no discredit, I am told, to the artist"; it was sent to Scotland, and was welcomed with cordial approbation by Lord Buchan. A miniature portrait of Colonel Tobias Lear, reproduced in this volume, was painted about this time. Whether it was executed in this country or during Colonel Lear's visit to Europe is not known.

with the prices of the other articles from Glasgow & London, shall be paid so soon as I can find a person disposed to receive the amount; & this I shall know, probably, when I converse with Mr Dalton; who, I believe, is on a visit to the Federal City; as he proposed to set out for it on Monday last.—

The reception you met with from the Earl of Buchan & Sir John Sinclair gives me sincere pleasure, and I am glad to find they have introduced you to characters which may not only contribute to your present gratifications, but which, in the revolution of events, may be of service in a future walk of life; without a possible disservice, that results not from imprudence; against which your own good sense will always secure you.—

I am much obliged to you for the several communications in your letters which have come to hand.— I place great reliance on them.— The opportunities you derive from mixing with people in different walks —high & low—of different descriptions—and of different political sentiments, must have afforded you an extensive range for observation & comparison:—more so, by far, than could fall to the lot of a Stationary character, who is always revolving in a particular circle.—

I am equally well pleased to hear that the concerns in which you are more immediately interested, are in as promising a train as the peculiarly disturbed state of matters in Europe would allow you to expect.— I hope they will continue, and that your plans may be accomplished to the fullest extent of your wishes.—

Mr Pearce, my present manager at Mount Vernon, has been directed to send for your fruit Trees the moment he hears of the Peggy's arrival at George Town;—and my Gardener is instructed to take particular care of them until they are otherwise disposed of by you;—but as the Vessel had not arrived the 29th ulto (when I heard from Mr Pearce) there is much reason to fear they will come too late, as a mild & placid March & pleasant April (except the first days of it) have caused a most luxuriant vegitation this spring, with us, from North to South.—

Not knowing where you may be, when this letter shall have reached London—nor the hazard it might run in following you if you should have left that metropolis—I shall do little more than *touch* political subjects.— To tell you that the order of his Britannic Majesty in Council of the 8th June

June last, respecting Neutral Vessels had given much discontent to the United States—and, that that of the 6th of November, & its results, had thrown them into a flame, will hardly be news to you when you shall have received this letter.— The subsequent order of the 8th of Janu^{y} has, in a degree, allayed the violence of the heat; but will by no means satisfy them without reparation for the Spoliations of our Trade & the injuries we sustain from the non-performance of the Treaty of Peace.—

To effect these, if possible by temperate means, by fair, & firm negotiations, an Envoy extraordinary is appointed, and will, I expect, sail in a few days.— M^{r} Jay is chosen for this mission.— M^{r} John Trumbell goes as his private Secretary.—

Many measures have been moved in Congress in consequence of the aforementioned orders of the British Cabinet.— Some have passed into Acts, and others are yet pending.— Those which have become Laws are; one for fortifying our principal Sea ports (which is now in vigorous execution) and another for raising an additional corps of 800 artillery men for the defence of them, & for other purposes.— The bills which are pending, are to complete our present Military establishment.— To raise an Army of 25,000 men in addition thereto.— And to organise—put in training—and to hold in readiness at a minute's warning, a select Corps of 80,000 Militia.— Of the passing of the first & last of these, no doubt seems to be entertained on either side of the House;—but those who are fearful of what they call a standing army, will give all the opposition they can to the other.— The result therefore none will predict in the present stage of the business.

Besides these, a Bill passed the House of Representatives[1] by a large Majority, founded on the following preamble, & resolution. "Whereas, the injuries which have been suffered, and may be suffered by the United States, from violations committed by Great Britain, on their neutral rights & commercial interests, as well as from her failure to execute the seventh article of the treaty of peace,[2] render it expedient for the interests of the United States, that the commercial intercourse between the two Countries should not continue to be carried on in the extent at present allowed:

"Resolved,

1 April 21, 1794, by a vote of 58 to 38.

2 This article stipulated indemnity to the owners of the deported slaves.

"Resolved, That from and after the first day of November next, all commercial intercourse between the citizens of the United States, and the subjects of the King of Great Britain, or the citizens or subjects of any other nation, so far as the same respects articles of the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, shall be prohibited."

This measure was arrested in the Senate, at the third reading, by the casting vote of the Vice-President;[1] not, as it is said, and generally believed, from a disinclination to the ulterior expediency of the measure, but from a desire to try the effect of negotiation previous thereto.—

Sequestration of British property (not including that in the funds) and other expedients of a similar kind, have been agitated in the House of Representatives, but seems, I think, to be talked off the stage.

The Packet from Mr Bartrand to Mr Jefferson was forwarded by the first Post after it reached my hands.— Mr. Jefferson resigned the office of Secretary of State the first of January, & was succeeded by the late Attorney General Mr Randolph; whose place of Attorney General is filled by Judge Bradford, of this state (Pennsylª).

Enclosed I give you the trouble of receiving the copy of a letter which I wrote to Mr Arthur Young, by Mr Willm Morris, on the 12th of december last.— At the time that letter was written I had no knowledge of Mr Young's late appointment, as Secretary of the National board of Agriculture, nor of the change of his political sentiments.— It is not improbable but that he has, already, or will, make you acquainted with the purport of the above letter.— Be this however, as it may, my inducement to send you a copy of it, is, that if the case should be otherwise—if there appears to be any repugnance on his part to comply with my wishes—and a *fair* occasion should occur of mentioning the matter in the course of your perigrinations through England, Scotland, or elsewhere, and you see no impropriety from circumstances, or your view of the subject at the moment, I should be glad if *you* were to do it.— My wish further is, to dispose of the lands I have had restored to me by Mr de Barth;—and in short my settled lands in the Western parts of this State, in the counties of Fayette & Washington.— I have raised the price

1 John Adams.

(Private)

(*) Besides these, I have another motive which makes me earnestly wish for the accomplishment of these things – it is indeed more powerful than all the rest. namely to liberate a certain species of property which I possess, very repugnantly to my own feelings; but which imperious necessity compels; & until I can substitute some other expedient, by which expenses not in my power to avoid (however well disposed I may be to do it) can be defrayed

Washington and His Slaves

Facsimile

Washington and His Slaves

Facsimile

price of my lands on the Ohio & great Kanhawa to twenty shillings Virg[a] currency p[r] acre;—the tract in Fayette (about 1700 acres) to forty, and that in Washington to thirty shill[gs] p[r] acre, Pennsylvania curr[y]—3000 acres.

I have no scruple to disclose to you, that my motives to these sales (as hath been, in part, expressed to M[r] Young) are to reduce my income, be it more or less, to specialties; that the remainder of my days may thereby, be more tranquil & freer from cares; and that I may be enabled (knowing precisely what my dependence is) to do as much good with it as the resource will admit—for although, in the estimation of the world I possess a good & clear estate; yet, so unproductive is it, that I am oftentimes ashamed to refuse aids which I cannot afford, unless I was to sell part of it, to answer the purpose. (*) You are so well acquainted with the situation and quality of the lands which are here mentioned, for Sale, that it is almost unnecessary to go into detail respecting them, with you.— Those, however on the Ohio, between the Mouths of the little and Great Kanhawa, are in three tracts containing 2314 acres, laying on the Banks of the River, ab[t] 12 miles below Mariatte—the 2[d] 2448 acres, still lower down (being the 4[th] large bottom on the East side of the River)— and the 3[d], on the same side, opposite to the Great Bend in the River, containing 4,395 acres; all of which are of the first quality.— The Lands on the Great Kanhawa are in no respect inferior.— They are contained in four Patents;—the first, beginning within two miles of the mouth of that river, and contains 10,990 acres of the richest bottom; stretching 17 or 18 miles along the river.— The next of 7,276 acres is a little above the last, on the opposite side of the River; and the other two

(Private.)

*Besides these, I have another motive which makes me earnestly wish for the accomplishment of these things—it is indeed more powerful than all the rest—namely to liberate a certain species of property which I possess, very repugnantly to my own feelings; but which imperious necessity compels; & until I can substitute some other expedient, by which expences not in my power to avoid (however well disposed I may be to do it) may be defrayed.—

two are still higher up, at the Mouth of, & on Coal River, both are of the first quality; & containing together about 5,000 Acres.—

Although it is my wish to convert these lands into Cash on the terms, and for the purposes mentioned—yet, for reasons which will readily occur to you, I would not hawk them about as some do, if they were never to be sold.—

I wish most sincerely that some inducement could be offered Professor Anderson which would bring him to this Country.— His labours are certainly ingenious, & worthy of encouragement; but I fear it will not be in my power to avail these States of them.— His communications however, are under consideration.—

Often through the medium of Mr Langdon, we hear of your son Lincoln, & with pleasure that he continues to be the healthy & sprightly child he formally was.— He declared if his Ticket should turn up a prize, he would go and live in the Federal City.— He did not consider, poor little fellow, that some of the prizes would hardly build him a Baby house, nor foresee that one of these small tickets would be his lot.— Having drawn no more than ten dollars.

Mr Bl——ts agency in this lottery will, it is feared, be more productive of thorns than roses;—the matter is not yet wound up—& the Commissioners appear to be uneasy.— In all other respects, matters as far as the acct. of them have come to my knowledge, are going on well.

My public avocations will not, at any rate, admit of more than a *flying* trip to Mount Vernon for a few days, this Summer:—this not suiting Mrs Washington, I have taken a house in German town to avoid the heat of this City in the months of July & August.— She, Nelly, & the rest of the family, unite with me in every good wish for your health, prosperity and safe return; than whom none, you may be assured, offers them with more sincerity.—

With affection & regard I am
and always shall be— Yours
G? Washington.

Tobias Lear, Esqr

German Town Aug^{t} 28th 1794.

My Dear Sir,

It gave me very sincere pleasure to find by your letter of the 22^{d} inst^{t} (which by the by did not come to my hand until the evening of the 26th, not time enough to acknowledge the receipt of it by the Post of next day) that you had arrived in good health at George Town with a valuable cargo of Goods, & that you had arranged your business to your satisfaction in England, Scotland and Holland.— When you shall have arranged your business at George Town, & business or inclination may turn your face towards the Eastward, it will be unnecessary to add, that to see you, w^{d} make this family happy; & with a little roughfing on your part you could be accomodated therein.—

If you have no acc^{ts} later, I have the pleasure to tell you that by a letter from your good mother to M^{rs} Washington, that she, & little Lincoln were perfectly well on the 11th of this month—and, by her account, —that he continued to be the fine sprightly child you left him.—

The enclosed, though out of season *now*, will serve to show that your letters did not sleep with me in silence.— It went by M^{r} Jay, and was returned by him with the following paragraph in a letter dated London 23^{d} June:

"On Sunday the 15th of this month I arrived here.— The next day I made enquiries for M^{r} Lear, and was informed that he had gone to Liverpool to embark for America.— I asked whether it was probable that letters sent by the Post would find him still there—the answer was, that it was highly improbable.— Under these circumstances & well knowing the jealous attention now paid to letters passing through the post office, I thought it most advisable to forebear making the experiment, & to return that letter to you."

The copy of my letter to M^{r} Young, from whom I have received no acknowledgement, will be of no other use to you now, than to show what were, and still are, my wishes; that if any enquiries after for back lands should be made in your presence, you might be enabled to bring mine into view.— The plan with respect to my Mount Vernon Estate I have no idea could be carried into effect in this Country.—

I

I had it in contemplation to visit that place about the last of September, or beginning of October, but the rebellious conduct of the people in the Western counties of this State renders the journey uncertain—& may defeat it altogether.

With very great sincerety and affection—

I am always yours

G° Washington.

M^r^ Lear.

German Town 28th Aug^t^ 1794.

Dear Sir,

M^r^ Johnson & Doct^r^ Stuart having resolved to withdraw themselves as Commissioners of the Federal City,[1] and not to act after the meeting which is proposed to be held on the 15th of next month, it has become necessary to appoint two others in their places.— One of whom, it is said, ought to possess a considerable stock of legal abilities; as cases are frequently occurring to render Law knowledge necessary for the purpose of deciding as well on points depending thereon as for the draughting of agreements & other instruments which are requisite in the progress of the business.—

M^r^ Scott (at present of Baltimore) a gentleman eminent in the profession of the Law—a man of character & fortune—and one who has the welfare of the New City much at heart,—has been applied to and accepts the appointed trust.— And if it is convenient and agreeable to you to accept also, the Commission will be again compleated; and the business go on without interruption, from & after the ensuing meeting as before.

It has been found from experience, indispensably necessary that the Commissioners should reside in the City (in George Town would be tantamount) and devote, by some arrangement amongst themselves, much of their time to the multitudinous concerns of the same; thereby superceding the necessity of employing a superintendant.— As the rendering of such duties are not to be expected on the terms the late Commissioners served

1 The commissioners called the seat of government "the City of Washington in the territory of Columbia," naming the city after George Washington, but without his knowledge or consent. He always referred to it as the Federal City.

served (and two of them decline it under any terms) I have now fixed the Salery for each at Sixteen hundred dollars p^{r} annum & am obliged to provide successors.

Were it not that I am unwilling to add anything that might carry with it the appearance of influencing your judgment, in the decision you are called upon to make, in this case; I shd. have expressed a wish that it might be found convenient to you to accept the appointment.— If, however, you should find it incompatible with your other plans & views and should decline the acceptance—I pray you to let me know, as far as you may be able to discover, in how respectable a light Doct^{r} Thornton stands, or would be considered by the Proprietors of the federal City (amongst whom he spent some time in the month of July last).— The Doct^{r} is sensible, and indefatigable, I am told, in the execution of whatever he engages.— To which may be added his taste for architecture; but being little known, doubts arise on that head.— If (in case of *your* not acceptance) any other person, or persons shd. occur to you, as fit for this business, be so good as to mention (under the rose) their names to me.— The appointment is necessary, & can be delayed no longer.

With very great esteem & regard

I am— Dear Sir,

Your affec^{t} Serv^{t}

G^{o} Washington.

M^{r} Lear.

Philadelphia Jan^{y} 12th 1795.

My Dear Sir,

On friday last I wrote you a few lines and assigned reasons for not writing more fully.—

In addition to what I then said, which was only to inform you that permission had been given, by the Canal Company[1] of this State, for M^{r} Weston

1 Soon after the close of the Revolutionary war Washington turned his attention to the development of internal commerce, hoping that Virginia and Maryland might secure, through the Potomac river, the trade of the West. Early in 1785 the legislatures of the two states passed laws for the formation of a company and subscription books were opened February 8th. In the following May, Washington was elected president of the canal company and James Ramsey was appointed general manager. The three impediments to the navigation of the Potomac were immediately attacked—Great Falls, Seneca Falls, and Shenandoah Falls. The Great Falls are still so called and are the rapids and falls above Washington; the Seneca Falls were early known as Sinegar Falls, lying above the Great Falls near the mouth of Seneca creek. Shenandoah Falls were at the present Harpers Ferry at the mouth of the Shenandoah river. The task was found to be gigantic, money came slowly, Washington was elected President of the United States for the term beginning March 4, 1789, and thereafter the affairs of the canal company languished. On ten different occasions between 1786 and 1820 the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland extended the time for the completioo of the work, but the project finally failed and the Baltimore and Ohio canal and railroad succeeded.

Weston to visit the falls of Potomack, and that he might be expected at the federal city about the first of next month, I shall notice with concern —it being contrary to the heretofore entertained opinion—that the funds for carrying on that navigation are, from your view of them, likely to fall short £10,000 sterlg of the object.—

What expedient had best be adopted for supplying the deficiency will merit serious consideration under existing circumstances.— On an abstract view of the case, I should give it as my opinion without hesitation, that the present shares ought to continue their advances until the final completion;—and for this plain and interesting reason (with me) that no speculation to which money can be supplied, will be more productive with so much honor and so little resque.— But how far the majority of the company (many of whom, probably, never bestowed a thought on the subject) may be of this sentiment—or how far their inclination and abilities might induce the adoption of the measure if they were, is not for me to decide;—and, as individuals of the company will be as free as others to become purchasers, if the shares are encreased;— it does not appear to be a matter of much moment which of these modes is preferred, or whether by loan, if the money is to be obtained.—

No doubt remains in my mind of what will be the productiveness of the tolls when the navigation is in full operation.— To the best of my recollection they were calculated to amount (at the time of passing the Acts of incorporation) to 15 pr Ct on the capital, by an estimate that was then made of the several articles which from their contiguity to the river it was known would be water borne.— Since that period, the population of the counties bordering on the potk.[1] and of course the produce arising therefrom, has encreased greatly; & when the Shenandoah is added thereto (which formed no part of the original estimate) it must equal the most sanguine expectation.—

Mr Claiborn's Engineers (for it seems that he has *two* for different purposes) are fixed in this city; either of wch, according to the use for which you want one, might be had at any time; but as I am not strongly impressed with a belief that men of eminence would come to this country in the manner, and under the circumstances they have done (but this I say

1 Meaning Potomac River.

say without having any knowledge of the real characters of these Gentlemen, and without design to injure them) might it not be politic to obtain the opinion of the most competent of them, before Mr Weston (who is known to be a scientific & experienced engineer) gives his?— He will not adopt their opinions contrary to his experience & judgment; but if his opinion is first taken and transpires, it may be given in to *by them* from the want of these in themselves; endeavoring thereby to erect a character on his foundation.—

I am much obliged by the trouble of your enquiries respecting my Tobacco in the Warehouses at Alexandria & George Town; & as the disposal of it is somewhat out of my way, at present; and in truth is a matter that rarely occurs to me except when I am reminded of it by Mrs Washington, you would add to the favor by making sale of it on such terms, and whensoever in your judgment the moment is favorable.— I am in no hurry, nor under any necessity to precipitate the Sale; and to your judgment also it is left, to continue where it is, or to remove the Tobacco from Alexandria to George Town.— We are all tolerably well, & join in good wishes, and the compliments of the season to you.— With regard & affection

I am always Yours

Go. Washington.

Mr Lear.

Mount Vernon 5th Augt 1795.

My Dear Sir,

It is my intention at present to be in George town tomorrow; but as I have been sending to the Post-Office in Alexandria every day since friday last for letters, without having received any from the Officers of Government; and may, by this days mail find such an accumulation of them, as to make it impracticable for me to give them proper attention— prepare answers against Saturday morning—and be on business in George town at the same time; I send you a power of attorney to act for me (if I should not be there) in the latter case.— In haste

I am Your Affecte Servt

Go. Washington.

Mr Tobs Lear.

I do by these presents, constitute & appoint Mr Tobias Lear my attorney, to represent my interest of fifty-five shares in the Potomack Company; a general meeting of which is to be held in George town (by adjournment) on Thursday next, the 6th instant.— And I do hereby authorise & require him to vote in my behalf, on any question, or questions which may come before the said meeting on that day, or during the continuance thereof by adjournment if I am not present—and his Acts and doings in the premises (conformably to Law) will be obligatory on me.

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(Seal (
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Given under my hand and seal this fourth day of August 1795.

Gº Washington.

Witness
Dº Stuart.
William Pearce, Junr

Philadelphia 2d Novr 1795.

My Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 19th & —— ult. came duly to hand, and I expected ere this to have been decisive upon the contents of them;—but the case being otherwise, I shall postpone writing fully to you until the next, or another Post.—

It may not be amiss however, briefly to observe, that Colº Rochfontain (being in this city) was asked how it came to pass, as he had seen the site at the confluence of the Rivers Potomac & Shenandoah, he had made no mention of it in his general report?— His answer was, there was no ground on which convenient buildings could be placed, & assigned other reasons in a written report, which he made.— But since the receipt of your last, with a letter from Genl Darke to the Secretary of War—I have suggested his going there again, in order to view the ground more accurately.— This, if nothing more pressing should require his attendance

ance in another quarter, will be the case.— I shall defer therefore saying anything further on the subject till this matter is decided.— If the Colº goes at all, he will probably pass through George Town, and if it could be made convenient for Colº Gilpin (who understands the nature, & application of water well) and yourself, to accompany him, advantages, I am persuaded, would result from the journey.— One of the Colºs objections to this site is, that no water work (on acct of freshes) would be safe there.— These lands, however, considering the reservations of the Ferries, buildings, &c, will come much higher than I had any idea of.—

If you have not already agreed for the Rent of my house in Alexandria at Sixty pounds pr annum, I wish this sum might be compared with other rents, before it is fixed on.— I was told by severals as I passed through Alexandria, that I might readily dispose of the lot, if I was so inclined, for £1200: Sixty pounds rent wd. be only an interest of five pr Ct, which is inadequate for house Rent.—

Give my love to Fanny and the Children, in which Mrs Washington joins, and be assured of the sincere esteem & regard of

Dear Sir

Your Affectionate

Mr Lear. Gº. Washington.

Philadelphia 30th Novr 1795.

My Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 17th instt came safe to hand, but not before the 26th.—

I intended to have written to you by Colº Rochfontaine, but he went off unknown to me.— Upon a second view of the site at the confluence of the Rivers Potomack and Shenandoah, with the explanations he will receive from Colº Gilpin and yourself, I hope & expect the advantages of that spot will strike him more favorable than was indicated in his report;— and that something will be decided upon with precision.—

It is with great pleasure I learn from your letter that the River between the Great & little falls has been so much improved this fall; & that

that the prospect of getting some of the new shares subscribed for by the Maryland assembly, is so good— I wish as good a disposition may be found in the other assembly;—but above all, that your means would enable you to proceed vigorously to the improvement of the navigation of the Shenandoah River: for that is the source from whence the wealth of the city is to be derived.—

If the directors are in want of such a character as the enclosed letter describes, it may be well to intimate it as soon as possible; as it is not likely that Mr Myers will remain long unemployed, as lock navigation is contemplated in many parts of this country.— I have not seen the Gentleman myself, but understand from others that his testimonials are full and ample; & that he is a stout, healthy man.

Your opening of Mr Maury's letter to me, was a thing of necessity, and I am obliged to you for having done so; and for the steps you took consequent thereupon—and for sending the goods to Mount Vernon.—

If I cannot get a full rent for my house in Alexandria I must be content with what it will fetch, and that without delay; otherwise (the cold weather approaching) the Inclosures will be torn down for firing, if no other damage is sustained from its being left unoccupied.— My love to Fanny & children.

I am always, & sincerely,
Yours Affectionate
G? Washington.

P. S. I will send to & will have a little conversation with Mr Myers, & give you the result in my next.—

Philadelphia 15th Feb 1796.

My Dear Sir,

On Thursday last I received your letter of —— (now in the hands of Colo Pickering, & date not remembered).

The business relative to the Arsenal at the mouth of Shenandoah, has been *shamefully* neglected:—and, (but under the rose I make the observation)

observation) I fear with design;—for I was continually reminding the Officer whose duty it was to carry the measure into effect, of the improvident delay; and about a fortnight ago, finding the matter remained in Statu quo, I gave a peremptory order for the execution: and was informed since by the Gentleman, that he had written to you on the subject—How it comes to pass that you should be ignorant of this, at the date of your letter,—there being sufficient time for the receipt of the former—is somewhat misterious.— Allowances ought, unquestionably, to be made for the multiplied duties of two Offices, which were discharged by one person—but the footing on which this business stood, and my frequent enquiries into it, ought to have produced more promptness in the Execution.— I hope no change in price, will force a change of place;—and that the thing will go on as if no delay had happened.—

I am very glad to find that the affairs of the Potomack Company are in so promising a train, and wish Capt. Myers may prove an acquisition in the Superintendance of them.—

I pray you to let me have a statement of my account with you; and for informing me precisely, what shares I hold in the Banks of Alexandria and Columbia.— My love to Fanny and the Children—and with very great esteem and regard I remain

Your Affect^e friend & Serv^t

G^o. WASHINGTON.

P. S. M^r White seems to entertain no doubt of a favorable issue to his Mission—but it goes (as everything else does) slowly.—

M^r LEAR.

Philadelphia 13^th Mar 1796.

My Dear Sir,

Your letters of the 26^th ult^o and 2^d Instant came safe to hand, after some delay.— The first, with the Will of Harper, has been put into the hands of the Attorney Genl. to aid him in the conveyances.— To such parts

parts of the second, as require it, I am about to reply; first expressing my satisfaction at the happy termination of the business which you undertook in behalf of the Public.—

Having no doubt of the correctness of the account, which was transmitted in the last mentioned letter; I have only to beg that you would favor me with the numbers and other designation or description of all the shares I now hold in the Banks of Alexandria & Columbia, by your purchases,—and to request, if you wish to part with any of the twenty shares you purchased in the Potomac Navigation, that you would appropriate the Balance due me, by your account, in as many as it will command;—first paying up the Instalment on the old; called for I perceive, to be paid on the first of the present month.— If my *present* purposes and gratifications could be answered by prospects of *future* emolument, I would devote all the money I could command to this Investiture; but for the few years I have to remain here, the enjoyment of less, with ease & certainty, will be more convenient and desirable.—

If my resources were adequate to the purchase of the Lot & houses which are offered for sale in Alexandria, I would gladly have been the purchaser of them; on the terms mentioned in your letter of the 2^{d} inst.; but as these depend upon contingencies, which may baffle calculation; I chuse to tread on sure ground in all my engagements;—being as unwilling to embarrass others, by uncertain contracts, as I am to be deceived myself in my expectations, from the assurances which I receive of promised payments.

From the enquiries which have already been made of you, relative to my farm at Mount Vernon, I take the liberty of enclosing you the terms on which I mean to leave them.— My expectation of disposing of them at the Rents therein mentioned, to such tenants as I should chuse, is not very sanguine;—nor would I incline to do it to the slovenly farmers of this country, if I had a tolerably well founded hope of getting them from any other, where husbandry is better understood and more rationally practiced; the mention'g of which to some of your acquaintance, as you may chance to fall in with them (particularly English & Scotch, the latter more especially) might be a means perhaps, of their suggesting it to others, in the land they come from.

It

It is not my intention, at least at the present moment, to let the Negros go with the Land; but if enquiries on this head should be repeated, it might be useful to me, to learn on what terms these, and the lands conjointly, could be disposed of.— Remember me kindly to Fanny & the Children, and be assured of the

Sincere friendship of
Your affectionate Servt
Gº Washington.

Mr Tobias Lear.

Philadelphia 3d of June 1796.

My Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 30th ultº was received yesterday.— As I expect (nothing new or unforeseen happening to prevent it) to commence my journey for Mount Vernon in ten or twelve days, I shall enter into no details respecting any of the matters touched upon in your letter of the above date.—

The chief design of my writing to you by this Post, is to inform you that your good Mother, and lovely son, arrived in this City on Tuesday evening; and left it yesterday about ten o'clock on their way to the Federal City.— Mrs Lear is very well, & Lincoln as sprightly as ever; but both disappointed at not meeting you here.

It was with great difficulty a carriage could be procured to take her on; for it so happened, that Congress closed their Session yesterday— that the members were struggling for, and bidding on each other for conveyances—and your Mother's anxious desire to get to you, would not permit her to wait.— At length, after some unavailing attempts, Mr Craik succeeded in getting a carriage & pair of horses, which I hope will take her safe down.

I will send sugar, and some other things, from hence.— We are all as well as usual, and join in best wishes for you. With sincere esteem & regard,

I am Your affectionate,
Gº Washington.

P. S.

P. S. A Mr Prescot attends Mrs Lear & Lincoln.— And it is not unlikely, as the weather is cool, but that they may be with you as soon as this letter as the Post does not travel on Sunday.

I did not know until after the Post had left the City on Wednesday, that Mrs Lear was in the city, or expected; or you should have been advised of the circumstance by the Mail of that day.—

Mount Vernon 25th Mar 1797.

My Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 20th instt with the Bill of lading for the Goods in the Sloop Salem, and another letter of the 15th are both received and I hope this will find you safely arrived in the Federal City.—

I have got Painters at work to prepare my rooms for the furniture which is expected; but I find I have begun at the wrong end, for some joiners work (of the deficiency of which I was ignorant before it was examined) ought to have preceeded theirs, as the fixing of the chimney pieces ought also to do.— The first I have engaged, but cannot, on enquiry, find that a skilful hand is to be had in Alexandria to execute the latter.— I would thank you therefore for engaging one, if to be had in the Federal City or George town, to be here on Monday or tuesday at farthest as my work will be at a stand without.— To prevent imposition, and to avoid disputes, I would prefer employing the artisan by the day.— The work *immediately* foreseen, and which must be done without delay, is, to refix the marble chimney piece in the Parlour which is almost falling out;—to fix the New one (expected from Philadelphia) in the small dining room;—to remove the one *now* there into what is called the School room;—to fix the Grate which is coming round in the large dining room;—and to give some repairs to the Steps; which (like most things else I have looked into since I have been at home) are sadly out of repair.—

'Tis possible either of the Commissioners or Captn Hoben could point out a proper character, as they have had to do with the best workmen; and tis possible, but I do not think it very probable, that Cornelius (my

(my old Servant) might be competent to it.— Two things however are necessary—viz—skill & dispatch.— Our best regards are presented to all with you—and I am

Your sincere friend and
affectionate Servant,
G° Washington.

Mr Lear.

P. S. If Cornelius had knowledge in practice or theory sufficient for the job, I should be disposed to give him a preference;—first because I am acquainted with his temper and industry;—and 2dly because I foresee many other things in his line that must be done as fast as I can accomplish them; by engageing a workman upon moderate terms, make Bricks or raise stone, and procure lime.—

The winds have been favorable to Captn Elkins, but we see nothing of his Sloop yet.— As soon as it arrives I will let you know, as it would be very pleasing to me, to have you here at that time.

Yrs &c
G. W.

Mount Vernon 2d Augt 1798.

Dear Sir,

I was glad to hear by Charles that you were much better than when we saw you last.— If you have missed the Ague, care, & Bark, is necessary to prevent a relapse; & this prudence requires.—

Monday next being the day fixed on by the Constitution of the Potomack Company for its annual meeting, & as you seem resolved to relinquish your present office of President,—I wish you would turn your thoughts attentively to the situation of it, and revolve seriously on characters fit and proper to supply the places of those who perhaps ought to, as well as those who will quit, the Directorship; that our struggles in that interesting & expence concern,—the labour of years—may not end in disgrace & loss.

The

The little leisure I had *before* my late appointment (from Visits,—my necessary rides—& other occurrences) to overhaul, arrange—and seperate papers of real, from those of little or no value, is now, by that event, so much encroached upon by personal & written applications for Offices, and other matters incidental to the Situation of the Commander in Chief, that without assistance I must abandon all idea of accomplishing this necessary work, before I embark in New Scenes; which will render them more voluminous & of course more difficult.— A measure which would be extremely irksome to me, to submit to, especially as it respects my a/c^{ts} which are yet in a jumble— My earnest wish and desire being, when I quit the Stage of human action, to leave *all matters* in such a situation as to give as little trouble as possible to those who will have the management of them thereafter.

Under this view of my situation;—which is far from being an agreeable one; & at times fills me with deep concern—when I perceive so little prospect of complete extrication—I have written to the Secretary of War to be informed whether (as my taking the Field is contingent, & no pay or emolument will accrue to myself until then) I am at liberty to appoint my Secretary immediately; who shall be allowed his pay & *Forage* from the moment he joins me.— If he answers in the affirmative, *on those terms*, can you do this?[1]— Have you heard from the Master of the Academy at Charles town?— At any rate, my opinion is, you had better, with the least possibly delay, get the boys fixed *permanently* at some good school they will, otherwise, lose precious moments.— Let me hear from you—I am in haste—but always

Your affect^{e}

G^{o} WASHINGTON

M^{r} LEAR.

1 Mr. Lear accepted the appointment.

APPENDIX

MISCELLANEOUS WASHINGTON LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

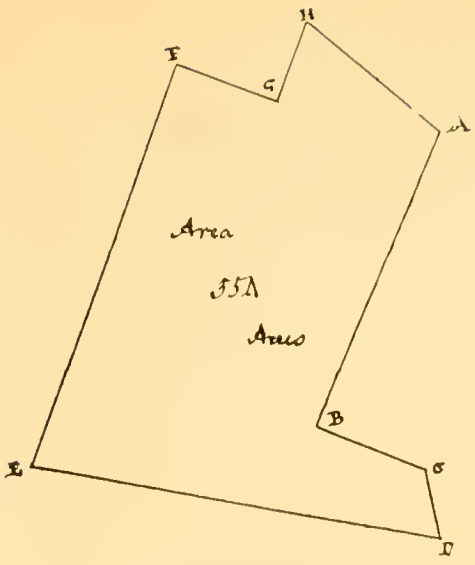
FROM THE ORIGINALS IN THE LIBRARY OF MR. BIXBY.

Survey by George Washington

Facsimile

Survey by George Washington

Facsimile



Pursuant to his Lordships directions I have Surveyd for Mr. Lawrence Washington a certain Tract of waste and ungranted Land situate in Fredericks County and joining the Lines of Capt. Rutherford Walter Shirley his own Mr. Augt. Washington & Henry Bradshaw bounded as follows viz.t

Beginning at a white Oak Capt. Rutherfords Beg. Trees thence with his Lines S. 22 W. Two hundd. & fifty five poles to a red Oak & white Oak thence S. 60 E. Ninety four poles to a dead red Oak & marked Hickory and a Locust Rutherfords Trees also Trees to Shirley thence with his Line S. 15 E. fifty five poles to Mr. Washingtons Trees thence with his Line N. 60 W. Three hundd. & thirty three poles to another of his Trees also Trees to Mr. Augt. Washington thence with his Line N. 19 E. Three hundd. & forty two poles to another Tree of Mr. Washingtons in Henry Bradshaws Line thence with his Lines S. 70 E. Eighty four poles to a Stone and a Locust & 3 poles from a Large red Oak on a Level Mr. N. 20 E. Sixty Eight poles to a White Oak on a Level in Bradshaws Line finally S. 55 1/2 E. One hundd. and thirty Seven poles to the beg. Cont. Five hundd. & fifty four Acres Viz.

25th of August 1750

by Washington

INSTRUCTIONS TO WASHINGTON UPON HIS APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF BY THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.

In Congress

To

George Washington Esq[r]

This Congress having appointed you to be General & Commander in chief of the army of the United Colonies and of all the forces raised or to be raised by them and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service and join the said army for the defence of American liberty and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof, you are to repair with all expedition to the colony of Massachusetts bay and take charge of the army of the United Colonies.

For your better direction

First. You are to make a return to us, as soon as possible of all forces, which you shall have under your command, together with their military stores and provisions; and also as exact an account as you can obtain of the forces which compose the British army in America.

Secondly. You are not to disband any of the men you find raised until further direction from this Congress; and if you shall think their numbers not adequate to the purpose of security, you may recruit them to a number you shall think sufficient not exceeding double that of the enemy.

Thirdly. In all cases of vacancy occasioned by death or a removal of a Colonel

NOTE.—This is a document of the highest importance—the Instructions of the Continental congress to Washington upon taking command of the army. Washington was a member of the first and second congresses and was unanimously elected commander-in-chief of the army on June 15, 1775, upon the nomination of Thomas Johnson of Maryland. The sum of $500 a month was allowed for pay and expenses. On the following day when notified of his election he said:

"Though I am truly sensible of the high honour done me, in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation. But lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room that I, this day, declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with. As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to have accepted this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

Richard Henry Lee, Edward Rutledge, and John Adams were appointed a committee to draft a commission and instructions. The Commission was adopted June 17, 1775, and the original is in the Library of Congress. The Instructions were adopted June 20, 1775, and the resolutions at the close were added two days later. This is the first time this document has ever been printed from the original.

Colonel or other inferior officer, you are by Brevet or Warrant under your seal to appoint another person to fill up such vacancy, until it shall be otherwise ordered by the provincial Convention or Assembly of the colony, from whence the troops, in which such vacancy happen, shall direct otherwise.

Fourthly. You are to victual at the continental expence all such volunteers as have joined or shall join the united army.

Fifthly. You shall take every method in your power, consistent with prudence, to destroy or make prisoners of all persons, who now are, or who hereafter shall appear in arms against the good people of the United Colonies.

Sixthly. And whereas all particulars cannot be foreseen, nor positive instructions for such emergencies so before hand given, but that many things must be left to your prudent and discreet management, as occurrences may arise upon the place or from time to time fall out; you are, therefore, upon all such accidents or any occasion, that may happen, to use your best circumspection and (advising with your council of war) to order and dispose of the said army under your command, as may be most advantageous for the obtaining the end, for which these forces have been raised, making it your special care, in discharge of the great trust committed unto you that the liberties of America receive no detriment.

Philadelphia June 22d 1775.

By order of Congress,

JOHN HANCOCK President.

In addition to yr Instructions it is

Resolved by Congress, That the troops including the volunteers be furnished with camp equipage & blankets if necessary at the continental expence.

That the Officers now in the army receive their commissions from the Genl. & commander in chief.

That a Sum not exceeding two Millions of Spanish milled dollars be emitted by the congress in bills of credit for the defence of America.

CHA. THOMSON Secy.

By order of Congress

JOHN HANCOCK President.

[Endorsed by Washington: Instructions from Congress 22d June 1775.]

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL WOOSTER.

Camp at Cambridge
September 2d 1775.

Sir

I have just received your Favour of the 29th ult. by Express. I am very sensible that the Situation of the Inhabitants of Long Island, as well as of all those on the Coast, exposes them greatly to the Ravages of the Enemy; & it is to be wished General Protection could be extended to them, consistent with the Prosecution of those great Plans, which have been adopted for the common Safety. This was early foreseen, & the Danger provided for by a Resolution of Congress, that each Province should depend on its own internal Strength against these Incursions: the Prejudice arising from them (even if successful) not being equal to that of separating the Army into a Number of small Detachments, who would be harassed in fruitless Marches, & Countermarches after an Enemy whose Conveyance, by Shipping is so advantageous, that they might keep the whole Coast in constant Alarm without our being able perhaps at any Time to give them vigorous Opposition. Upon this Principle I have invariably rejected every Application made me here, to keep any Detachments on the Coast for these Purposes. I should therefore most probably have thought it my Duty to have ordered the three Companies mentioned in your Letter, to have joined your Army to act on the general Service, had they not been under Command from General Schuyler to join him: But as it is, I can by no Means interfere. He is engaged in a Service of the greatest Importance to the whole Continent, his Strength & Appointments far short of his Expectations, and to give any Counter-orders may not only defeat his whole Plan, but must make me responsible to the Publick for the Failure.— Instead therefore of their further Stay, I would have them march immediately. I fear, the Delay of the Ten Days may have very bad Effects, as by my last Advices from Ticonderoga Genl Schuyler was to march in a few Days for Canada, & it is highly probable, he

he may depend upon these Companies to occupy the Posts of Communication, which otherwise he must weaken his Army to do.—

No Provincial Congress can with any Propriety interfere in the Disposition of Troops on the Continental Establishment, much less controul the Orders of any General Officer, so that in this Instance the Congress at New York have judged properly in declining to counteract General Schuyler's Orders. I wish I could extend my Approbation equally to the whole Line of their Conduct.

Before you receive this Letter you will most probably be able to judge how far your Continuance on Long Island will be farther necessary. If the Fleet which last sailed was destined for those Coasts, it must be arrived—if it is not, it is certainly gone to the Eastward, & your present Station is no longer necessary. The Importance of preserving the Communication of the North River, & many other Reasons induce me to wish you were returned to your former Post. The late Transactions at New York, furnish additional Reasons for your being as near that City as is consistent with the Discipline & Convenience of your Troops. Your next therefore I flatter myself will inform me of your having resumed your former Station.

I am, Sir, with much Regard &
Esteem Your most Obed^{t}
& very Hble Serv^{t}
G^{o} Washington.

General Wooster.[1]

1 David Wooster was born in Stratford, Conn., March 2, 1710, was graduated from Yale in 1738, and entered the provincial army in 1739. He was a captain in 1745, colonel in 1755 and later brigadier-general of Connecticut troops, and served during the French war. He was an originator of the expedition that captured Ticonderoga in 1775 and on the organization of the Continental army was appointed third on a list of eight brigadier-generals. For a time he served in Canada, then resigned from the army and on his return to Connecticut was made the first major-general of the militia of that state. He was in command at Danbury when the place was attacked by Governor William Tryon's troops on April 26, 1777. Wooster, at the head of 200 men, attacked the rear of the British forces; several discharges of artillery caused the Americans to break, whereupon Wooster cried, "Come on, my boys! Never mind such random shots!" But a musket-ball pierced his body and he died at Danbury May 2, 1777. In the following June the Continental congress appropriated $500 for a monument to his memory, but the money was never paid and the grave of the hero soon became unknown.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL CLINTON.

Head Quarters N. York 9th Augt 1776.

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 2d Instant is duly Received. enclosed you have a Resolution of the Provincial Convention which came to hand last Evening, by which you will please to Regulate your Conduct. I must beg you to Inform Me as soon as possible what number your Brigade now consists of—and what number it will contain when a fourth part of the Militia are drafted agreeable to Order of provincial Congress.

My Intelligence Received, and movements observed of the Enemy, we have the greatest Reason to believe a general Attack will be made in the Course of a very few Days,—our numbers are much short of the Enemy. I hope no time will be lost in Marching the Reinforcements expected to our Assistance from different Quarters, with all possible Dispatch. I am

Sir Your Most Hum. Servt

Go. Washington.

Gen. Clinton.[1]

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Camp above the Falls at Trenton[2]

Decb. 22d 1776.

Dear Sir.

Your favour of yesterday came duely to hand, and I thank you for the several agreeable articles of Intelligence therein contained.— For godsake

1 James Clinton was born in Ulster county, N. Y., August 9, 1736, became an ensign in the militia and was advanced to be lieutenant-colonel before the beginning of the Revolution. He distinguished himself in the French and English war at Fort Frontenac, captured a sloop of war on Lake Ontario, was appointed colonel of the Third New York regiment in 1775, and accompanied Montgomery to Quebec. He was made a brigadier-general August 9, 1776, (the date of the above letter), commanded Fort Clinton when it was attacked in October of the following year by Sir Henry Clinton and after a gallant defence (600 men against 3000) was compelled to fly. He was the last man to leave the works, received a severe bayonet wound, but escaped by riding a short distance and then sliding down a precipice of 100 feet to a creek. He participated in Sullivan's campaign against the New York Indians, commanded at Albany, was present at the siege of Yorktown and the evacuation of New York, and died in Orange county, N. Y., December 22, 1812.

2 This is one of the most interesting of all the Washington letters. It gives a vivid account of the condition of the patriot army and calls earnestly for assistance. No doubt some was granted, and a few days later Washington fought and won the battle of Trenton. Robert Morris, to whom the appeal was made, was "the financier of the Revolution." He was born in Liverpool, England, January 20, 1734, came to this country when 13 years of age, and though in middle life he was a remarkably successful business man, he died in Philadelphia May 8, 1806, in poverty and distress. Morris was a member of the Continental congress for several years, took a leading part in its work and was particularly energetic in raising money to support the army. In February, 1781, he was elected superintendent of finance and served as such till November, 1784. He was a member of the convention that framed the Constitution and was elected a member of the first senate.

godsake hurry Mr. Mease[1] with the clothing as nothing will contribute more to facilitate the recruiting Service than warm & comfortable clothing to those who engage.— Muskets are not wanted at this place, nor should they, or any other valuable Stores (in my judgment) be kept in Philadelphia, for sorry I am to inform you, my dear Sir, that unless the Militia repair to the City for defence of it, I see no Earthly prospect of saving of it after the last of this Instant; as that fatal vote of Congress respecting the appointment of new officers has put the Recruiting business upon such a footing, and introduced so much confusion into the old Regiments, that I see no chance of raising men out of them; by the first of next month then, we shall be left with five Regiments of Virginia, one of Maryland Col° Hands and the Remains of Miles'; reduced so much by Sickness, fatigue &c as in the whole not to exceed, but fall short of, 1200 men.— Upon these and the Militia is all our dependence, for you may as well attempt to stop the winds from blowing, or the Sun in its diurnal, as the Regiments from going when their term is expired.—

I think with you Sir (that however missed you may be in Congress) your presence in the City cannot be dispensed with—I will give you the earliest information in my power of immediate danger; in the meantime, I advise for the reasons before mentioned that you detain no Papers you can possibly do without—for I am satisfied the Enemy wait for two events only to begin their operations upon Philadelphia. Ice for a Passage, and the dissolution of the poor remains of our debilitated army.

Gen[l] Sullivan is just come up with the Troops under Gen[l] Lee, about 2000 men—Gen[l] Gates is here, and a small division under him of about 600 expected to-day; this with about four or five and twenty hundred at most, here before, composes the strength of my army (the City Militia excepted) but this under the rose.

Alas poor Lee! taken by his own Imprudence! We have no distinct accts. of him, if any should arrive Mr. Tilghman or I, will communicate them

1 The reference is to John Mease, whose services during the Revolution were in the highest degree valuable. He was born in Strabane, Ireland, in 1746, came to this country in 1754, was one of the original members of the first troop of Philadelphia cavalry, and was one of the twenty-four men of that corps who crossed the Delaware with Washington on December 25, 1779. He was one of the five men detailed to keep alive the fires along the line of the American encampment at Trenton to deceive the enemy when the army marched to attack the rear-guard of the enemy at Princeton. Mr. Mease served throughout the war, suffered heavy losses of property through the depredatioos of the enemy, but in 1780 gave $20,000 for the support of the army. He died in Philadelphia in 1826. In his later years he continued to wear the three-cornered hat of Revolutionary times aod was called "The last of the cocked hats."

them to you.[1]— Insults accompanied the taking of him, since that I have heard that he was treated well by Lord Cornwallis to whom he was first Carried.

The Commissary (Mr. Wharton) informs me that, he cannot prevail on the Millers to grind; & that the Troops in consequence, are like to suffer for want of Flour—this if I understand him proceeds either from disaffection, or an unwillingness to take Continental Money in pay, which in fact is the same thing—this must be remedied by fair, or other means.

With sincere regard and esteem

I am Dr Sir Yr Most Obdt

Gº Washington.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL SMALLWOOD.[2]

Head Quarters Middle
Brook 28th May 1779.

Sir,

The knowledge you have of the general Situation of the enemy makes it unnecessary I should enter into any further detail than barely to inform you—

That their number at New York Staten and Long Island—supposing the detachment which went to Virginia to consist of two thousand men, agreeable to the accounts I have received—amounts according to the best estimate I have been able to form to about 9000 Men. At Rhode Island their strength is about 5 or 6000. Their remaining force in these States is

1 This was Charles Lee, of whose disgraceful character and treasonable designs Washington was at this time in utter ignorance. Lee was born in Dernhall, Cheshire, England, in 1731, was the son of a colonel in the British army, and had a remarkable career as a soldier of fortune in Europe before entering the Colonial army, of which he aspired to the chief command. He was placed second on the list of major generals, became the first on the resignation of General Ward, and took command of the right wing of Washington's army. When Washington was trying to check the movement of the British troops on Philadelphia, Lee was expected to co-operate. He proved, however, to be insubordinate and reckless, and for some unexplained reason made his headquarters at Baskingridge, four miles from his army, and there he was captured on December 13, 1776, by a party of British dragoons. Relieved of his presence, his troops marched to Washington's assistance in time to take part in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. Lee was taken to New York, where he began an intrigue against the Americans and actually wrote a plan of operations against them. He was exchanged in May, 1778, and joined Washington, who was still in ignorance of his character. In the ensuing campaign he showed treachery or cowardice, was removed from command, and court-martialed. He so angered congress by his insolence that he was dismissed from the army, and he died friendless and alone in a Philadelphia tavern, October 2, 1782.

2 William Smallwood was one of the distinguished officers of the Revolution. He was born in Kent county, Maryland, in 1732, and died in that state in 1792. The Maryland troops under his command took a prominent part in the battle of Brooklyn Heights, bore the brunt of the fight at White Plains, and saved the day at Germantown. Smallwood was wounded several times, was repeatedly promoted, and after the war served in congress and as governor of his native state.

is in Georgia and Virginia— In addition to these, their whole influence is exerted to stimulate the Indians from one end of the Western frontier to the other against us, and reinforcements are expected from Europe. But what may be their precise destination or amount is uncertain— The current of intelligence points to New York and to at least 5000 Men.

Our own force and present disposition are pretty well known to you; but to give you a more exact idea, I shall observe, that, besides the Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia troops now in this camp and the North Carolina troops at Paramus, there are three Brigades of Massachusetts troops and one of Connecticut on the North River—one of the latter at Danbury and about 2500 Continental troops at Rhode Island. You will be able to form a sufficiently accurate judgment of the collective strength of these Corps; but if you should wish for more precise information, you can obtain it by applying to me. The rest of our force except about 6 or 700 on the Ohio will be employed to the Westward against the Indians—

I can say scarcely anything of the reinforcements we have reason to expect— The measures persuing by the several States to augment their battalions and the success with which they are attended have as yet come but partially to my knowledge. I fear our prospects are very inconsiderable.

Under this concise account of matters and taking a comprehensive view of our affairs in general—particularly the state of our supplies and the depreciation of our currency—I am to request you will favor me with your opinion of the plan of conduct which it will be proper for us to persue at this juncture for the advancement of the common cause and for the honor & interest of the American Arms; in doing which, I shall be obliged by a very free and full communication of your sentiments—

I am Sir

Your Most Obet. servant,

G? Washington.

Brigadier Gen^l^ Smallwood.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

Head Quarters Middle
Brook June 2d 1779.

Sir,

I have received your letter of this date ½ past eight—

The Virginia division marched this day with orders to endeavor to reach Morris Town to-morrow and to communicate with you and proceed according to intelligence and circumstances— You will be pleased to open a correspondence with the commanding officer for this purpose.

To-morrow if possible the Maryland division will march also and by the same route—

I send you a small addition of Cavalry—

I rely entirely upon your prudence and judgment for taking such measures as the exigency of the case shall require—

So soon as the last troops move I shall come immediately forward to join you—by the way of Pluchamin[1] and Morris Town.

I am, Dr. Sir,
Yr most Obet Servant
Gº Washington.

General St. Clair.[2]

[Inscribed: Major Genl St. Clair. Go. Washington. Endorsed: General Washington June 2d 1779. Middle Brook.]

1 For Pluckemin, a town in New Jersey, which derived its singular name from an old Irishman noted for his address in imposing on the credulous.

2 Arthur St. Clair was born in Thurso, Caithness, Scotland, in 1734, received a scientific and classical education, went into the army, and came to this country in 1757. He served under General Amherst at the capture of Louisburg and under Wolfe at Quebec. In 1764 he settled down as a farmer in Ligonier valley, Pennsylvania, and held many civil offices. He was appointed brigadier-general in the Continental army in 1776, organized the New Jersey militia, participated in the battles of Princeton and Trenton, and succeeded Gates in command of Ticonderoga. When attacked by a superior force he evacuated the fort and thereby incurred the displeasure of Washington. Nevertheless he acted as his aide at Brandywine and assisted Sullivan in organizing his expedition against the Six Nations. He was a member of the court that condemned Major André, was active in raising troops and sending them to the South, and joined Washington shortly before the surrender of Cornwallis. He was a delegate to the Continental congress and served as president in 1787. On the organization of the Northwestern territory he was appointed its governor and served till 1802. Although Washington's last words to him were, "Beware of a surprise," he was incautious and being surprised near the Miami village on November 4, 1791, was defeated by the Indians led by Blue Jacket, Little Turtle, and Simon Girty, the renegade. Washington refused a court of inquiry, but congress appointed a committee to investigate his conduct and it exonerated him. St. Clair died in Greensburg, Pa., August 31, 1818.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

Head Quarters Morris Town 12th Febr 1780.

Dear Sir

I received yours of yesterday, late last night. I am pleased to find that the Vigilance of your Guards and patrolls disappointed the enemy whatever might have been their intentions. I have taken precautions to guard against an attempt by such a party as might be reasonably supposed to be able to reach this in the course of a night, and I hope that a short continuance of this Weather will make the Ice impassable by Horse—from Foot there is no danger at this distance.

If you still think an attempt upon Buskirk's Corps practicable you are at full liberty to try the experiment. I am confident you will undertake nothing but what will be justified by appearances and a probability of success.

I am with great Regard

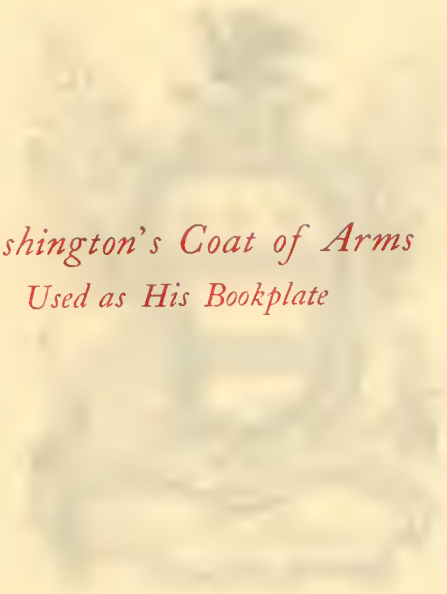
Dear Sir

Yr most Obt. Servt

Go. Washington.

General St. Clair.

P. S. As the enemy have made an incursion with their Horse by the way of Hackensack, will it not be prudent in you to extend your patrols of Horse more to your left while the Ice is passable. Whenever persons apply for liberty to go within the Enemy's lines having the permission of the Executive of any of the States, Congress or Board of War, you may suffer them to pass without an application to me. Mons. Thierry will call upon you for a passport either by Staten Island or Paulus Hook as he may find admission.— You will be pleased to grant it to him—



Washington's Coat of Arms
Used as His Bookplate

Washington's Coat of Arms
Used as His Bookplate



PRIVATE PLATE

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

Head Quarters New Windsor 4th April 1781.

Sir,

I am to acknowledge the honor of your Excellency's favors of the 19th and 21st ultº and again to thank you, for your uniform and speedy communication of every southern event which comes to your knowledge.

I have the pleasure to find, from General Greene's official letter, that Lord Cornwallis is not likely to reap any great benefits from his late Victory—indeed—were we certain that he would not soon receive fresh succours, we might hope that he would ultimately be obliged to quit his present ground in consequence of the incumbrance which his wounded must be to him. But I very much fear, we shall soon hear that General Phillips, who sailed from New York about a fortnight ago with a detachment said to be 1500 Men, is bending his course towards his Lordship.

You have been, by this time, made acquainted with the unfortunate event which prevented the execution of the plan against Arnold. Had the French Fleet luckily gained the Chesapeak before they were overtaken by the British, I think we could not have failed of Success.

The pennsylvania Line will be pushed forward, by detachment, as fast as they can be reassembled or recruited. I hope the 1st division will consist of five or six hundred, and that they will be soon upon their march. Having heard nothing from them very lately, I cannot ascertain the time, but I am certain that General Wayne, who will go forward with the first, will be active on the occasion.

I have the honor to be with very
great Respect and Esteem
Yr Excellency's
Most obt and humble Servt
Gº Washington.

His Excellency
Gov. Jefferson.

[Endorsed: General Washington's Letter. April 26th 1781.]

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO MR. JOSEPH JONES.[1]

Newburgh 14th Decr 1782.

Dear Sir,

In the course of a few days Congress will, I expect, receive an Address from the Army on the subject of their grievances.

This address, tho' couched in very respectful terms, is one of those things which tho' unpleasing, is just now unavoidable.— For I was very apprehensive once, that matters would have taken a more unfavorable turn from the variety of discontents wh. prevail at this time.— The temper of the army is much soured, and has been more irritable than at any other period since the commencement of the War.— This consideration alone prevented me (for everything else seemed to be in a state of inactivity and almost tranquillity) from requesting leave to spend this Winter in Virginia, that I might give some attention to my long neglected private concerns.—

The dissatisfactions of the Army had arisen to a great & alarming height—& combinations among the officers to resign in a body—at given periods—were beginning to take place, when by some address & management their resolutions had been converted into the form in which they will now appear before Congress— What that Honorable Body can, or will do in the matter, does not belong to me to determine; but policy in my opinion should dictate soothing measures, as it is an incontrovartible fact, that no part of the community has undergone equal hardships and borne them with the same patience and fortitude that the Army has done.— Hitherto the Officers have stood between the lower order of the Soldiery & the public—& in more instances than one have quelled, at the hazard of

1 Joseph Jones was a distinguished member of the Continental congress from Virginia and was born in that state in 1727 and died there in 1805. In this and the two succeeding letters General Washington gave a vivid account of the sufferings and wrongs of the soldiers of the Continental army, and pleaded with him to exert his influence to see that the accounts of the soldiers were liquidated, that they might return to their homes satisfied. The letters throw new light on a most critical period in Washington's life—the intrigue of the officers against the authority of congress. Anonymous addresses had been circulated and a desperate effort was made to rouse the army to resentment. When a meeting of the officers was called, Washington insisted upon attending, and delivered a most impresssve address. After reading the first paragraph of what he had prepared, he begged the indulgence of those present while he paused to put on his spectacles, saying that he "had grown gray in the service of his country and now found himself growing blind." Proceeding with his address, he dwelt upon the services and sacrifices of the army, reminded them of the poverty of congress and urged them "to express their utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overthrow the liberties of our country, and who wickedly attempts to open the floodgates of civil discord and deluge our rising empire in blood." He retired with a heart full of grief and forebodings, but the officers, who regarded him with the utmost tenderness and had the highest respect for his opinions, followed his advice. "Every doubt was dispelled," wrote Major Shaw in his journal, "and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course."

of their lives, very dangerous Mutinies— But if their discontent should be suffered to rise equally high, I know not what the consequences may be.

The spirit of enthusiasm which overcame every thing at first, is done away— It is idle therefore to expect more from Military Men than from those discharging Civil offices of Government.— If both were to fare equally alike with respect to the emoluments of office I would answer for it that the Military character should not be the first to complain.— But it is an inviduous distinction, and one that will not stand the test of reason or policy, that one set should receive all and the other no part (or that which is next to it) of their pay; in a word the experiment is dangerous and tho' it should succeed, would only prove that the one is actuated by more Zeal than the other—not that they have less occasion for their money.

Gº WASHINGTON.

The Honble
JOSEPH JONES ESQR

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO MR. JOSEPH JONES.

Newburgh, 12th March, 1783.

Dear Sir,

I have recd. your letter of the 27th ult. & thank you for the information & freedom of your communications. My official letter to Congress of this date will inform you what has happened in this quarter. In addition to which, it may be necessary it should be known to you, & to such others as you may think proper, that the temper of the Army, tho' very irritable on acct. of their long and protracted sufferings, has been apparently extremely quiet while this business was depending before congress, until four days past.— In the meantime it should seem reports have been propagated in Philadelphia, that dangerous combinations were forming in the army & this at a time when there was not a syllable of the kind in agitation in camp.

It also appears that upon the arrival of a certain gentleman from Philadelphia in camp, whose name I do not at present incline to mention,[1] such

[1] Walter Stewart, in the opinion of James Madison.

such sentiments as these were immediately & industriously circulated.— That it was universally expected that the army would not disband until they had obtained justice.— That the public creditors looked up to them to redress their grievances, would afford them every aid, and even join them in the field if necessary.— That some members of Congress wished the measure might take effect in order to compel the public, particularly the delinquent States, to do justice—with many other suggestions of a similar nature, from whence & a variety of other considerations, it is generally believed the scheme was not only planned, but also digested & matured in Philadelphia and that some people had been playing a double game—spreading at the camp and in Philadelphia reports, & raising jealousies equally void of foundation, until called into being by their vile artifices ;—for as soon as the minds of the officers were thought to be prepared for the transaction, an anonymous invitation was circulated, requesting a general meeting of the officers next day—at the same instant, many copies of the address of the officers of the army were circulated in every State line of it.

So soon as I obtained knowledge of these things I issued the order of the 11th (transmitted to Congress) in order to rescue the foot that stood wavering on the precipiece of despair, from taking those steps wh. wd. have led to the abyss of misery, while the passions were inflamed, and the mind tremblingly alive to the recollection of past sufferings, & their present feelings.— I did this upon the principle that it is easier to divert from a wrong to a right path, than it is to recal the hasty & fatal steps which have been already taken.

It is commonly supposed, if the officers had met agreeably to the anonymous summons, resolutions might have been formed, consequences of which may be more easily conceived than expressed.— Now, they will have leisure to review the matter more calmly & seriously.— It is to be hoped they will be induced to adopt more rational measures, and wait awhile for the settlement of their accounts, the postponing of which gives more uneasiness in the army than other anything.— There is not a man in it who will not acknowledge that Congress have not the means of paying him ;—but why not say they—one and all— liquidate the accounts and certify their dues? Are we to be disbanded & sent

sent home without this?—are we afterwards to make individual applications for such settlement at Philadelphia, or at any auditor's office in our respective states;—to be shifted perhaps from one board to another, & dance attendance at all; and finally be postponed till we lose the substance in pursuit of the shadow.— While they are agitated by these considerations, there are not wanting invidious characters who tell them "It is neither the wish nor intention of the public to settle your accounts, but to delay them under one pretext or another, till peace, which we are upon the verge of, & a separation of the army takes place; when it is well known, it will be difficult, if not impracticable a general settlement can be accomplished, and that individual loss, *in this instance* will be a public gain."

However derogatory these ideas are to the dignity, honor & justice of Government, yet in a matter so interesting to the army, & at the same time so easy to be effected by the public as that of liquidating the accounts is delayed, without any apparent or obvious necessity, they will have their place in a mind that is soured & has become irritable.— Let me intreat you therefore, my good Sir, to push this matter to an issue and if there are delegates among you who are really opposed to doing justice to the army, scruple not to tell them, if matters come to extremity, that they must be answerable for all the ineffable horrors which may be occasioned thereby.

With great respect, etc

G° Washington.

The Honble
Joseph Jones, Esq^r^

[Note: This letter is in the autograph of James Madison and is endorsed by him: Copy taken by permission.]

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO MR. JOSEPH JONES.

Newburgh 18th March, 1783.

The Storm, which seemed to be gathering with unfavorable prognostics, when I wrote to you last, is dispersed; and we are again in a state of tranquility— But do not, My Dear Sir, suffer this appearance of tranquility to relax your endeavours to bring the request of the Army to a conclusion.— Believe me, the Officers are too much pressed by their present wants, & are rendered too sore by the recollection of their past sufferings to be touched much longer upon the string of forbearance, in matters wherein they can see no cause for delay— Nor would I have further reliance placed on any influence of mine to dispel other clouds if more should arise from the causes of the last.—

By my official letter to Congress, and the papers enclosed in it, you will have a full view of my assurances to, and the expectation of the Army; and I persuade myself that the well wishers to both—and of their country, will exert themselves to the utmost to irradicate the seeds of distrust, & give every satisfaction that justice requires, and the means which Congress possess will enable them to do.—

In a former letter I observed to you, that a liquidation of accts. in order that the ballances might be ascertained is the great object of the Army, and certainly nothing can be more reasonable.— To have these Ballances discharged at this, or in any short period, however desirable, they know is impracticable—and do not expect it; altho' in the meantime, they must labour under the pressure of those sufferings which is felt more sensibly by a comparison of circumstances.—

The situation of these Gentlemen merit the attention of every thinking and grateful mind.— As Officers, they have been *obliged* to dress & appear in character.— To effect this they have been *obliged* to anticipate their pay, or participate their Estates.— By the first, debts have been contracted.— By the latter, their patrimony is injured.— To disband men therefore under these circumstances, before their accounts are liquidated and the Ballances ascertained, would be to sett open the doors of gaols and then to close them upon seven years' faithful and painfu services.—

services.— Under any circumstances which the nature of the case will admit, they must be considerable sufferers; because necessity will compell them to part with their cirtificates for whatever they will fetch, to avoid the evil I have mentioned above.— And how much this will place them in the hands of unfeeling—avaricious speculators, a recurrence to past experience will sufficiently prove.—

It may be said by those who have no disposition to compensate the services of the Army, that the Officers have more foresight than to place dependence (in any alternative) upon the strength of their own arm— I will readily concede to these Gentlemen that no good could result from such an attempt, but I hope they will be equally candid in acknowledging, that much mischief may flow from it—and that nothing is too extravagant, to expect from men, who conceive they are ungratefully and unjustly dealt by,—especially too, if they can suppose that characters are not wanting to foment every passion which leads to discord—and that there are—but,—time shall reveal the rest.

Let it suffice, that the very attempt would imply a want of justice, and fix an indelible stain upon our national character; as the whole world —as well from the Enemies publications (without any intention to serve us) as our own, must be strongly impressed with the sufferings of this Army from hunger, cold and nakedness in almost every stage of the war.

With great respect, etc.

The Honble
Joseph Jones Esq^r^

G^o^ Washington.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TILGHMAN.[1]

Newburgh 10^th^ Jan^y^ 1783.

My Dear Sir,

I have been favored with your letters of the 22^d^ & 24^th^ of last month from Philadelp^a^; & thank you for the trouble you have had with my

1 Tench Tilghman was born in Maryland in 1744 and died in Baltimore in 1786. He began life as a merchant in Philadelphia, but joined the army on the outbreak of the Revolution and in August, 1776, became military secretary and aide upon Washington's staff, serving as such to the end of the war. He was selected by Washington to bear to Congress the news of the surrender of Cornwallis, and received the thanks of that body.

my small Commissions.— I have sent Mr Rittenhouse the glass of such spectacles as suit my eyes, that he may know how to grind his Christals.—

Neither Du portail nor Gouvion are arrived at this place.— To the latter, I am refered by the Marqs la Fayette for some matters which he did not chuse to commit to writing.— The sentimts however which he has delivered—(with respect to the Negotiations for Peace) accord precisely with the ideas I have entertained of this business, ever since the secession of Mr Fox,—viz. that no peace would be concluded before the meeting of the British Parliament.— And that, if did it not take place within a month afterwards, we might lay our accts for one more Campaign —*at least.*

The obstinacy of the King, and his unwilling to acknowledge the Independency of this Country, I have ever considered as the greatest obstacles in the way of a Peace.— Lord Shelburne who is not only at the head of the Administration, but has been introducing others of similar sentiments to his own—has declared, that nothing but *dire necessity* should ever force the measure.— Of this necessity men will entertain different opinions.— Mr Fox it seems, thought the period had arrived sometime ago; and yet Peace is not made—nor will it, I conceive, if the influence of the Crown can draw forth fresh supplies from the Nation, for the purpose of carrying on the War.

By the meeting of Parliament, Lord Shelburne would have been able to ascertain two things—first, the best terms on which G. Britain could obtain Peace.— Secondly, the ground on which he himself stood.— If he found it slippery, & that the voice of the People was for pacific measures—he would then, have informed the Parliament that, after many months spent in Negotiation—such were the best terms he could obtain— and that the alternative of accepting them or preparing vigorously for the prosecution of the War, was submitted to their consideration (being an extraordinary case) and decision.— A little time therefore, If I have formed a just opinion of the matter, will disclose the result of it—consequently, we shall either soon have Peace, or not the most agreeable prospect of War, before us—as it appears evident to me, that the States *generally*, are sunk into the most profound lethargy, while some of them, are running *quite* retrograde.—

The

The King of G. B. by his Letters Patent (which I have seen) has authorized Mr Oswald to treat with any Commissioner, or Comrs from the *United States* of America, who shall appear with proper powers— This, certainly, is a capital point gained.— It is at least breaking ground on *their* part,—and I dare say proved a bitter pill to Royalty ; but, it was indispensably necessary to answer one of the points above mentioned, as the American Commissioners would enter on *no business* with Mr Oswald till his Powers were made to suit their purposes.— Upon the whole, I am fixed in an opinion that Peace—or—a pretty long continuance of the War will have been determined before the adjournment for the Hollidays ; and as it will be the middle or last of February before we shall know the result, time will pass heavily on in this dreary mansion—where we are, at present, fast locked in frost & snow.—

Nothing new has happened in this quarter since you left it, except the abuse of me in a New York Paper for having given *false information* to the Count de Vergennes ; which (says the writer) was the occasion of the insinuation in *his Letter to me* of a want of British justice.— I have not seen the Paper but am told the author of the piece is quite in a passion at my want of ingenuity—and ascribes the release of Captn Asgill to a *peremptory order* from the Court of France (in whose service he places me) notwithstanding the soft and complaisant language of the French Minister's Letter.

Mrs Washington has received the Shoes you ordered for her, & thanks you for your attention to her request—I receive with great sensibility & pleasure your assurances of affection and regard.— It would be but a renewal of what I have often repeated to you, that there are few men in the world to whom I am more attached by inclination than I am to you.— With the Cause, I hope—most devotedly hope,—there will soon be an end to my Military Services—When as our places of residence will not be far apart, I shall never be more happy than in your company at Mt Vernon.— I shall always be glad to hear from and keep up a correspondence with you.—

Mrs Washington joins me in every wish that can tend to your happiness.— Humphrys & Walker, who are the only Gentlemen of the Family that

that are with me at present—will speak for themselves.— If this finds you at Baltimore, I pray my respects to Mr Carroll and family.— With the greatest esteem and regard

I am—Dear Sir
Yr most Obedt and
Affect. Hble Servt
Gº Washington.

Lieutt Colº Tilghman.

DISCHARGE OF A CONTINENTAL SOLDIER.

By His Excellency
GEORGE WASHINGTON, Esq;
General and Commander in Chief of the Forces of the
United States of America.

THESE are to CERTIFY that the Bearer hereof
John Southerd private
in the Second N. York Regiment, having faithfully served the United States Six Years and Six Months and being inlisted for the War only, is hereby DISCHARGED from the American Army.

Given at Head-Quarters the

Gº Washington.

By His Excellency's
Command,
J. Trumbull, Junr Secy.

Registered in the Books
of the Regiment,
Christ. Hutton, Lt & Adjutant.

The above John Southerd private has been honored with the Badge of Merit for Six Years faithful Service.

P. Cortlandt, Colº
Head-Quarters

Head-Quarters, June 8th 1783.

THE within CERTIFICATE shall not avail the Bearer as a Discharge, until the Ratification of the definitive Treaty of Peace; previous to which Time, and until Proclamation thereof shall be made, He is to be considered as being on Furlough.

Gº WASHINGTON.

[On the face of the discharge appear the words: Warrant Issued for one hundred acres. War Office October 16th, 1790.]

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX.[1]

Mount Vernon, 18th Aug. 1786.

My Dear Marquis:

I cannot omit to seize the earliest occasion, to acknowledge the receipt of your very affectionate letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 22nd of May; as well as to thank you for the *present* of your Travels in America and the Translation of Colonel Humphreys Poem, all of which came safely to hand by the same conveyance.

Knowing as I did, the candour, liberality & philanthropy of the Marquis de Chastellux, I was prepared to disbelieve any imputations that might militate against those amiable qualities. For character & habits are not easily taken up, or suddenly laid aside. Nor does that mild species of philosophy, which aims at promoting human happiness, ever belye itself by deviating from the generous & godlike pursuit.— Having, notwithstanding, understood that some misrepresentations, of the work in question, had been circulated; I was happy to learn that you had

1 Francois Jean, Chevalier de Chastellux, was born in Paris in 1734 and died in that city October 28, 1788. He entered the army when a boy, made a gallant record, and came to this country, serving as major-general under Rochambeau, and gaining the friendship of Washington. His "Voyage dans l'Amerique septentrionale dans les annes" was published in Paris in 1786 and contains an interesting account of the war and observations on the character of the chief actors in it. The Colonel David Humphreys mentioned in the above letter was born in Derby, Conn., July 10, 1752, and died in New Haven, Conn., February 21, 1818. He was graduated from Yale in 1771, was attached to the staff of General Putnam in 1778 and in 1780 was appointed aide-de-camp to Washington, which place he retained till the close of hostilities. At the siege of Yorktown he particularly distinguished himself and congress gave him a sword. He was a poet of no mean ability and during the war wrote stirring lyrics designed to stimulate the patriotism of the soldiers. On the disbanding of the troops he accompanied Washington to Mount Vernon and lived there a year. He was then appointed secretary of legation to Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, who were sent to negotiate treaties of commerce and amity with European powers. He returned in 1786, and remained a member of Washington's family till 1790, when he was appointed minister to Portugal. His "Address to the Armies of the United States" was translated into French by Marquis de Chastellux.

had taken the most effectual method to put a stop to their circulation, by publishing a more ample and correct edition. Col° Humphreys (who spent some weeks at Mount Vernon) confirms me in the sentiment, by giving a most flattering account of the whole performance. He has also put into my hands the translation of that part in which you say such, & so many handsome things of me; that (altho' no sceptic on ordinary occasions) I may perhaps be allowed to doubt whether your friendship & partiality have not, in this one instance, acquired an accendency over your cooler judgment.

Having been thus unwarily, and I may be permitted to add, almost unavoidably betrayed into a kind of necessity to speak of myself, and not wishing to resume that subject, I chuse to close it forever by observing; that as, on the one hand, I consider it an indubitable mark of mean-spiritedness & pitiful vanity to court applause from the pen or tongue of man; so on the other, I believe it to be a proof of false modesty or an unworthy affectation of humility to appear altogether insensible to the *commendations* of the virtuous & enlightened part of our species. Perhaps nothing can excite more perfect harmony in the soul, than to have this string vibrate in unison with the internal consciousness of rectitude in our intentions, and an humble hope of approbation from the supreme disposer of all things.

I have communicated to Colonel Humphreys that paragraph in your letter which announces the very favorable reception his Poem has met in France.— Upon the principles I have just laid down he cannot be indifferent to the applause of so enlightened a nation, nor to the sufferages of the King & Queen who have been pleased to honor it with their royal approbation.

We have no news on this side of the Atlantic, worth the pains of sending across it. The Country is recovering rapidly from the ravages of War.— The seeds of population are scattered far in the Wilderness —agriculture is prosecuted with industry— The works of peace, such as opening rivers, building bridges, &c. are carried on with spirit— Trade is not so successful as we could wish— Our State Governments are well administered. Some objects in our Fœderal system might probably be altered for the better— I rely much on the good sense of my

my Countrymen & trust that a superintending Providence will disappoint the hopes of our enemies. With sentiments of the sincerest friendship, I am, my dear Marqs.,

Yr Obedt and Affecte Servt
Go. Washington.

The Marqs. de Chastellux.

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL KNOX.

Philadelphia 31st May 1787.

Dear Sir,

It gave me great pleasure to find by your letter of the 29th that you were freed from all apprehension on acct of Miss Lucy's eye—and that we might flatter ourselves with the expectation of seeing Mrs Knox & you at this place.— It was not untill Friday last that Seven States assembled in Convention. By these I was, much against my wish, unanimously placed in the chair — Ten States are now represented, and Maryland probably will be so in the course of a few days.— Should New Hampshire come forward, Rhode Island will then stand very *singularly* alone.

As it is not even certain that this letter will get to New York before you shall have left it I will only add Compliments to Mrs Knox and assurances of the sincerest friendship of

Yr affece
Go. Washington.

[To General Knox.]

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TO THE COMMISSIONERS.

Philadelphia Sep. 5th 1793.

Gentlemen,

Mr Winstanley, a celebrated Landskip Painter, is disposed to take a view of the Federal City, or of the grounds in the vicinity of it.— As

As you will be there about the time he may arrive, I take the liberty of giving him this letter of introduction to you.

His designs are more extensive and I have suggested the Great & little Falls;—the passage of the River Potomac through the Blue Mountains—the Natural bridge; &c as grand objects.— I am always

Your Most Obed. Sert

Gº. Washington.

[Directed to Thomas Johnson, David Stuart and Danl Carroll Esquires, Commrs of the Federal District, George Town. Favored by Mr Winstanley.]

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO PATRICK HENRY.

Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 15th Jany 1799.

Dear Sir

At the threshold of this letter, I ought to make an apology for its contents;—but if you will give me credit for my motives, I will contend for no more, however erroneous my sentiments may appear to you.—[1]

It would be a waste of time, to attempt to bring to the view of a person of your observation & discernment, the endeavors of a certain party among us, to disquiet the Public mind with unfounded alarms;—to arraign every act of the Administration;—to set the People at varience with their Government;—and to embarrass all its measures.— Equally useless would it be, to predict what must be the inevitable consequences of such policy, if it cannot be arrested.—

Unfortunately, and extremely do I regret it, the State of Virginia has taken the lead in this opposition.— I have said the *State* Because the

1 This letter, which is of very great importance and in the composition of which Washington took special pains, relates to the alien and sedition laws which had been passed by Congress, and to the resolutions of the legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia in denunciation of them, passed in November and December, 1798. The resolutions of the Kentucky legislature declared these acts "not law but altogether void and of no force" and those of the Virginia legislature denounced them as "palpable and alarming infractions of the constitution." Washington was greatly alarmed, not only at the attempt of states to nullify the acts of the nation but at the efforts to involve the United States in quarrels with European nations. No reply to this letter has ever been found, but there is little doubt that Patrick Henry's successful candidacy for a seat in the house of representatives was in response to Washington's urgent appeal.

the conduct of its Legislature in the Eyes of the World, will authorize the expression ;—because it is an incontrovertable fact, that the principle leaders of the opposition dwell in it ;—and because no doubt is entertained, I believe, that with the help of the Chiefs in other States, all the plans are arranged ; and systematically pursued by their followers in other parts of the Union ;—though in no State except Kentucky (that I have heard of) has Legislative countenance been obtained, beyond Virginia.—

It has been said, that a great mass of the Citizens of this State are well affected, notwithstanding, to the General Government, and the Union ;—and I am willing to believe it—nay do believe it :—but how is this to be reconciled with their suffrages at the Elections of Representatives ; both to Congress & their State Legislature ; who are men opposed to the first, and by the tendency of their measures would destroy the latter ?— Some among us, have endeavored to account for this inconsistency and though convinced ourselves, of its truth, they are unable to convince others ; who are unacquainted with the internal policy of the State.—

One of the reasons assigned is, that the most respectable & best qualified characters among us, will not come forward.— Easy & happy in their circumstances at home, and believing themselves secure in their liberties & property, will not forsake them, or their occupations, and engage in the turmoil of public business ;—or expose themselves to the calumnies of their opponents, whose weapons are detraction.—

But at such a crisis as this, when everything dear & valuable to us is assailed ; when this Party hang upon the Wheels of Government as a dead weight, opposing every measure that is calculated for defence & self preservation ;—abetting the nefarious views of another Nation, upon our rights ;—preferring, as long as they durst contend openly against the spirit & resentment of the People, the interest of France to the Welfare of their own Country ;—justifying the first at the expence of the latter :—when every act of their own Government is tortured by constructions they will not bear, into attempts to infringe & trample upon the Constitution with a view to introduce Monarchy ;—when the most unceasing, & purest exertions were making to maintain a Neutrality which has been proclaimed by the Executive, approved unequivocally by Congress, by the State

State Legislatures,—nay by the people themselves, in various meetings; and to preserve the Country in Peace, are charged as a measure calculated to favor Great Britain at the expence of France,—and all those who had any agency in it, are accused of being under the influence of the former, and her pensioners;—when measures are systematically and pertenaciously pursued, which must eventually dissolve the Union or produce coercion.— I say, when these things have become so obvious, ought characters who are best able to rescue their Country from the pending evil to remain at home?— Rather, ought they not to come forward, and by their talents and influence, stand in the breach wh. such conduct has made on the Peace and happiness of this country, and oppose the widening of it?—

Vain will it be to look for Peace and happiness, or for the security of liberty or property, if Civil discord should ensue,—and what else can result from the policy of those among us, who, by all the means in their power, are driving matters to extremity, if they cannot be counteracted effectually?— The views of Men can only be known, or guessed at, by Their words or actions.— Can those of the *Leaders* of Opposition be mistaken then, if judged by this Rule?— That they are *followed* by numbers who are unacquainted with their designs, and suspect little, the tendency of their principles, I am fully pursuaded— But, if their conduct is viewed with indifference:—if there is activity and misrepresentation on one side, and supiness on the other, their numbers, accumulated by Intriguing, and discontented foreigners under proscription, who were at war with their own governments, and the greater part of them with *all* Government, their numbers will increase, & nothing, short of Omniscience, can foretell the consequences.—

I come now, my good Sir, to the object of my letter—which is—to express a hope, and an earnest wish, that you wd. come forward at the ensuing Elections (if not for Congress, which you may think would take you too long from home) as a Candidate for representative, in the General Assembly of this Commonwealth.

There are, I have no doubt, very many sensible men who oppose themselves to the torrent that carries away others, who had rather swim with, than stem it, without an able Pilot to conduct them—but these are neither

neither old in Legislation, nor well known in the Community.— Your weight of character and influence in the Ho. of Representatives would be a bulwark against such dangerous sentiments as are delivered there at present.— It would be a rallying point for the timid, and an attraction to the wavering.— In a word, I conceive it to be of immense importance at this crisis that you should be there;—and I would fain hope that all minor considerations will be made to yield to the measure.

If I have erroneously supposed that your sentiments on these subjects are in union with mine;—or if I have assumed a liberty which the occasion does not warrant, I must conclude as I began, with praying that my motives may be received as an apology; and that my fear, that the tranquillity of the Union, and of this State in particular, is hastening to an awful crisis, have extorted them from me.

With great, and very sincere regard and respect,—I am—Dear Sir

Your Most Obed^{t} & Very H^{ble} Servt^{t}

G^{o} Washington.

Patrick Henry Esq^{r}

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO GENERAL KNOX.

Mount Vernon 22^{d} May 1799.

Dear Sir,

Ralph Wormeley Esq^{r} (who will present this letter to you) carries one of his sons to Harvard College, to be fixed there as a Student.— Being a Stranger in the New England States, I beg leave to introduce him to your acquaintance & civilities.

He is a Gentleman of respectability in his own State;—a friend to the Constitution & Government of the Union;—and a person of Information;—qualifications which, I persuade myself, will insure him a ready reception with you.—

Present M^{rs} Washington's best regards along with mine, to M^{rs} & Miss Knox;—and be assured of the sincere &

Affectionate esteem of Yours

always

G^{o} Washington.

General Knox.

L. of C.

MARTHA WASHINGTON TO MRS. WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon June the 22d 1784.

My Dear Madam—

After a very long passage the Cotton arrived safe.— I was much concerned that I should have given Mr. B. Washington the troble,— He thought it would be a very easy thing to percure,—it was to add to some thread I have had spun several years in the House,— I thank you for the cotton, and should be very unhappy if you have disfirnished your self by spairing it out of your own stock,—it would have been noe inconveniance to me, to have stayed another year, for to have my piece, of cloth finished,—my spinners had just spun up all the wool and had little to doe, was the reason I thought of spinning cotton—and I could not get any in this part of the country—the West India cotton not being brought to Alexandria in the shops—

It would in deed give me much pleasure to come to Bushfield to visit you and will when it is convenient to the General to leve Home on a visit; he has so much business of his one and the publicks to gather that I fear he will never find lezure to goe to see his friends;—I would with pleasure have sent you the weeping willow but the man told me he was not going down derectly,—if he had, it was too late to plant it this summer, at the proper time for planting it, you may have as much as you please as it would give me pleasure to send you any thing of that sort that is worth sending to you from here—

I am happy to hear Mrs. Washington has increased her family and is well I wish she could make it convenient to come to see us.

The General joins me in love and good wishes to you and all with you.

I am Dear Madam
Your affectionate sister
and friend—
M. Washington.

[Inscribed: Mrs. Washington, Bushfield.]

MARTHA WASHINGTON TO FRANCES WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia June 15th 1797.

My Dear Fanny:

I am sorry to hear by your Letter of the tenth that your little girl has been so ill— I hope she has got quite well before this— I have not a doubt but worms, is the principle cause of her complaints. Children that eat everything as they like and feed as heartily as your does must be full of worms— Indeed my dear Fanny I never saw children stuffed as yours was when I was down and reather wondered that they were able to be tolarable with such lodes as they used to put into their little stomacks— I am sure thare is nothing so pernisious as over charging the stomack of a child—with every kind of food that they will take— Expearance will convince you of the impropriety if nothing else will—

I can with much truth say that I am realy sorry that I cannot come down to Mt. Vernon this summer particularly on your account— The president says he cannot make a longer stay than a few days—which would make it very inconvenient to me, to be thare without him—besides I should not like to have any thing to do with Mr. Pearce's Family in the House.[1] The President will bring two white men with him—one of them may sleep in Whiting's room, the other in the Garret— Let thare be a bed put in the Garret room—and one for the other man as they may be ready— The President talks of leving this on Tuesday morn—and I suppose he will make all the dispatch he can as he does not expect to be for long from hear—

I sent to Mr. Palmer as soon as your letter came to my hands— He is out of town and his work men knows nothing of your measure: it will be as well for you to send one of your old shoes when the President return, and then you will be scertain that your shoes will fitt—and I will have them done as soon as I can it is difficult to get any thing done hear— The trades people suffered very much in the Yallow fever—the shoe makers complain of the want of journey men— I hope it will be better now that Congress is gone—every man must have something either to send or carry home—which constantly imployed the trades people in this city.

My

1 Mr. Pearce was Washington's manager at Mount Vernon.

My dear Fanny, if Mrs. Herbert's spinout is not sent home—I beg you will have it carefully sent up in the Boat, when your things * * * * with many thanks to him for the lone of it— I hope that it has not got any injury staying in our house this winter— I charged Frank to have it sent up derectly but I fear thar is not much dependance on him— My love and good wishes attend you and children and believe me my

dear Fanny your
most affectionate
M. WASHINGTON.

[Inscribed: Mrs. Fran. Washington, Mt. Vernon, and endorsed, in her autograph: From Mrs. M. Washington June 15th 1794.]

BETTY LEWIS TO HER BROTHER GEORGE WASHINGTON.

June 26th 1796.

My Dear Brother

Your letter of the 27th of April I received and should have Answered it sooner but expecting you in dayly postponed writing untill you arriv'd at Mount Vernon, not hearing from you again on Harriot's subject, I have been makeing all the enquirey I Could concerning Mr. Parks that was in my power I have heard nothing to his disadvantage on the contrary he is respected by all his acquaintance he is a constant Visitor here and I believe Harriot's affections are plac'd intirely on him, and engaged so far as this if your consent can be obtained.

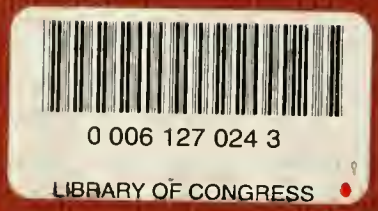
Harriot begs you will pardon her not writing her self but hopes your being fully acquainted with her sentiments Concerning Mr. Parks will be some apology she is not well I believe her anxiety for fear of offending and not gaining your consent has Produc'd this, your long Silence has given her much uneasiness.

My Dear Brother if you have any Mules for sale and can let me have one I will with pleasure pay you the Price of it I am under the necessity of purchasing a Work Nag and prefer A Mule.

Harriot Joines me in love and good wishes for you and my sister Washington and believe me to be Your Affecte. sister

BETTY LEWIS.

[Inscribed: Free. The President of the United States, Mount Vernon. Endorsed in Washington's autograph: From Mrs. Betty Lewis 26th June 1796.]


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